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Faculty of Human and Social Sciences
Department of English

A DIAGNOSTIC EVALUATION of EFL STUDENTS' COMPETENCE in COMMUNICATION and the NEED of INTEGRATING PRAGMATIC INSIGHTS to DEVELOP ORAL PERFORMANCE

The case study of third year students of the English Department of the University of Biskra

A dissertation prepared for the requirement of a Magister Degree in language and civilisation

Presented by:
Lebbal Farida

Supervised by:
Dr. GHOUAR

Jury Members:

1 Dr. MOUMEN
2 Dr. MENNANI

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Dedication

To my parents …

Abstract:

This work focuses on the acquisition of pragmatic competence by advanced EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students. This is achieved thought two complementary stages: First, a survey via a questionnaire is conducted on how do oral expression teachers of the English department of the University of Biskra perceive their students' level of competence in communication. The data gathered reveal that our respondents, by and large, are not satisfied with the oral communicative level their students manifest. They attribute this mainly to the lack of knowledge about situationally appropriate utterances their students display. Second, we carry out an experiment in which we try to suggest a remedy for what teachers think is the source of underachievement .i.e. pragmatic incompetence. And this by suggesting a number of activities to an experimental group and then evaluating their new level of competence in communication. Comparing the final results of the experimental and the control group allow us to test the validity of our suggested hypothesis, and to conclude that, indeed, pragmatic instruction does have a positive impact over our sample population oral performance. By the end, we culminate the enquiry by a set of recommendations and suggestions to oral expression teachers to help their students benefit the development of pragmatic competence, and consequently, attain a more advanced level of oral proficiency.

Key words: diagnostic evaluation, EFL (English as a Foreign Language), competence in communication, pragmatic competence, oral performance.

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Introduction

Foreign language teaching, perhaps more than any other social or human discipline, is constantly going under changes in revolutionizing the teaching methodology and producing new teaching techniques. These changes are primarily motivated by the will of researches to keep with the changing emphasis on what learners are expected to learn.

Since research made it evident that what makes second or foreign language learners competent in the target language is not only the mastery of the linguistic rules but also the practice of free-form communication, language teaching approaches tried to integrate a communicative dimension in the language class, now regarded as a social environment. This and many other changes in perspective gradually led to what is known as Communicative Language Learning.

The communicative approach, in vogue since the 1970's, shifted the focus from "*a parrot-like based learning of the four skills to the much broader field of teaching language within its socio-cultural dimensions*" (Okazaki and Okazaki, 1990). Thus, Culture, viewed previously in terms of material achievements of a particular society, entered the classroom in a different guise, as a vital adjunct to the linguistic components, aiming at instilling the knowledge required by the students for successful communication within the target language society. As a consequence, recognition was given to the fact that culture-specific norms of interpersonal interaction are inseparable from communicative competence and that every

interaction in another language represents a cultural act.

Pragmatic competence, an essential culture specific aspect of a speaker's communicative competence, studies the contextual appropriateness in realising different communicative acts. When trying to parallelize this with language teaching, it could be said, in simple terms, that teaching pragmatics means above all teaching the target language with its functional requirements .i.e. teaching a language with emphasis on the relational and contextual functions native speakers use in different situations. The challenging natures of this task made researchers long believe that pragmatic competence is the aspect of communicative competence that is beyond the reach of foreign language learners, because this would require, above all, direct meaningful communication with members of the target language speech community.

But in the past two decades, some researchers recognized pragmatics as a valid focus of inquiry in foreign language research, and proved that it can be described and introduced to foreign language learners in precise and illuminating ways. Thus, integrating insights from pragmatics was confirmed to be accessible not only to scholars and teachers, but also to students concerned with the relationship between language and culture.

Statement of the problem:

Despite the emergence of the new paradigms of preparing learners for contextual communication, some foreign language classes are still conducted within the classical parameters of the foreign language pedagogy. The classes in question are generally

part of societies which culture is far from the target language culture. And, indeed, as it has been attested to by numerous investigations (Wierzbicka, 1985; Crozet, 1996; Liddicoat, 1997; McCarthy, 1994; and many others), the greater the distance between cultures, the greater the difference in the realisation of the pragmatic rules governing interpersonal interaction.

This is the case of the Algerian EFL (English as a foreign language) context, where the norms applicable within-culture interactions are often very alien to the students. This is best illustrated by learners whose FL proficiency is advanced but who are unable to use the target language spontaneously, something which reflects the very considerable cultural distance between Algeria and English speaking countries. Such a report mirrors also that the pragmatic aspect of communicative competence is not emphasized in the teaching / learning process, and that English different linguistic items are taught independently from their contextual use.

In an attempt to verify this statement, the investigation tries to answer questions like: "is oral performance developed the way it should be?" if not, and if the drawback stands in the students' competence to communicate, "What kind of competence do we teach to our students?", "is it the appropriate type of competence to reach a communicative level?", "what should communicative competence include?" …etc. In short, the investigation tries to answer the question "in addition to linguistic competence, what other aspects of the target language advanced learners need to be competent in so that their oral performance attains the expected level?"

Hypotheses and assumptions:

It could be hypothesized that oral proficiency (compared to written one) is impeded because it tends to involve the most emotional reactions such as inhibition, anxiety and shyness. Moreover, oral performance is influenced by a number of variables including topic, purpose, audience…etc

One other conjecture of such an obstruction is that language learning doesn't take place in an integrative manner, i.e. different structural linguistic items forming what we call "linguistic competence" are taught in isolation from their contextual framework, with less regard to how, when and why to use them .In other words, there seems to be more emphasis on the linguistic than on the pragmatic side of communicative competence.

The aim of the study:

While I do not attempt to provide unequivocal answers in this small study, the overarching questions, which guide my inquiry, include the following:

- How does one acquire pragmatics in a foreign language?
- What aspects of pragmatics can be acquired most readily by language learners?
- Are there ways to structure classroom activities to make pragmatics more accessible?

All in all, the present research aims at delineating pragmatic competence from the linguistic one (this is not to claim that there is a disconnection between the two terms) and at investigating the effectiveness of teaching some of its aspects. Besides, in accounting for the practical implications of pragmatic competence, the study intends to raise the awareness of language teachers to its importance. Such awareness should

hopefully be conductive to a more salient regard on the part of teachers to the nature of communicative competence they should introduce, to what extent it could be taught, and more conspicuously, how to teach it.

Motivations of the study:

This study is both theoretically and practically motivated. From a theoretical point of view, pragmatic competence has been one of the key-words of language teaching for many years: a reasonable number of studies have been carried out in the domain of its development and there has been a certain amount of controversy as to what the concept really means. It follows; however, that little substantial evidence is available as to the degree of realisation of these studies, especially when it comes to accounting for such concept in relation to teaching English as a foreign language.

Practically viewed , and as far as the course of oral expression is concerned, it has been observed that there is little consideration of students' performance in the teaching/learning process : some teachers of oral expression tend to emphasize more receptive rather than productive skills , either by adopting exclusively limited aspects of the audio-lingual method in language laboratories , or by basing the course on the written presentation which often takes the aspect of a mere reading or reciting of papers that students have downloaded directly from different web sites . In both cases, the learning process can be described as one of conditioning without the involvement of any social or culture-based interactional dimensions, the fact which renders the learning environment a boring one .Of course, such a method could be beneficent at the level of students' linguistic competence, and could result in the mastery of

grammatical and phonological systems of the target language and a large amount of vocabulary which enables students to produce correct sentences. However, empirical researches conducted in the field of S/FLT prove that learners have to be initiated to a more pragmatic aspect of a language in order to achieve a near-native speaker communicative competence.

Delimitations of the study:

This investigation is based on the assumption that if we could integrate a pragmatic dimension to teaching linguistic competence, then the general level of students' oral performance can be enhanced.

It is worth stating, however, that oral performance is not only affected by the deficit in competence to communicate. Some psychological factors are of a great importance in the actual performance of language. But they are not treated in this study since our intention is to focus much more on the instructional rather than on the psychological variables of such an underachievement.

Feasibility of the research was an issue right from the beginning: Pragmatic competence is a culture-bound system, and conducting an experiment aiming at developing it without the assistance of a native speaker could be regarded as "bold". To make this clear, we need to mention that the activities applied during the experiment were not designed by the experimenter but chosen from a range of textbooks and websites specifically targeting American pragmatic competence development.

Moreover, the mere fact that many subjects from the population chosen refused to cooperate could have a negative effect on the study's generalizability.

Controlling for the numerous confounding variables of the present research is also a threat to the internal and external validity of the experiment. Because as the degree of control for each variable increases, the difficulty in performing the research also increases.

Furthermore, available materials providing sufficient exposure to authentic use for pragmatic realizations are limited in the conditions of the experiment. Consequently, we were obliged to reduce the number of activities planned for impossibility of realization.

The research methodology design

I. Choice of the research method:

The choice of the research method depends on the nature and objective of the subject. It should be sufficient in leading to extract answers to all the questions of investigation.

Our present research is accomplished through two different complementary stages:

1. The first stage is a survey aiming at diagnosing third year students' competence in communication through a questionnaire administered to oral expression teachers.
2. The second stage requires an action research attempting to suggest a remedy to the insufficient students' level of oral proficiency revealed in the questionnaire.

And this achieved through suggesting some activities targeting the development of pragmatic competence.

II. The variables:

As already stated, the main hypothesis of the present research is that, what makes students communicatively incompetence is their lack of pragmatic knowledge about the target language, and if this aspect is integrated in the curriculum of foreign language teaching, students' oral proficiency level would significantly improve. Thus it is clear that here we are trying to establish a relationship between two variables: a dependant variable which is student's competence in communication, and an independent variable which is the integration of some pragmatic notions in the oral expression class.

III. Methodological procedure:

III.1. The questionnaire

A questionnaire (Appendix A) consisting of twenty three items and covering four sub-areas of investigation is administered to a 30% sample of oral expression teachers of the English department. (University of Biskra).

III.2. The experimental Design

A"Pre-test Post-test Equivalent Groups Study**"** is chosen as an experimental design, because it is testified to be the most effective in terms of demonstrating cause and effect among research methods.

III.2.a. The selection of the participants

Because of the claim that the acquisition of pragmatic competence requires a certain level of linguistic competence, we needed to take advanced learners as a population for investigation (third and fourth year). But because the research comprises also another variable, which is oral expression course, we were left only with one choice, which is third year students.

The large number of third year students of the university of Biskra English department makes us confine our investigation on a representative sample of about 10 %, chosen through a random stratified selection.

III.3. The experiment procedure

According to the objectives of the research, we follow certain planned steps in our experiment realization:

1. Almost two months are spent first with the pre-selected groups “equivalently” to attain standardization.
2. The stratified selection was made to choose the 15 subjects of the experiment from each group.
3. Both groups have had a pre-test in the same way.
4. A treatment phase or a full work experience program is applied, this time, only on the experimental group. The control group is allowed to participate in some activities with a placebo effect
5. Finally, a post test is imposed on both groups and grades are compared.

Organization of the study:

Our present research is divided into two main parts: the first part reviewing the literature accounts for three major concepts: communicative competence, pragmatic competence and finally pragmatic competence but this time in relation to language teaching.

These theoretical findings are put into practice in the field work part: after defining the framework and methodology of the research, two data gathering tools are dealt with separately:

1. The questionnaire ensuring the descriptive inspection is analysed. Its concluding results serve as a platform to the experimental study.

2. A true experimental design is carried out in order to see if the dependent variable has got an effect on the independent one. The observable results are reinforced by a statistical analysis.

After a general conclusion , a set of pedagogical implications try to resume the whole work by giving suggestions to oral expression teachers, hopefully, to help their students' s development of pragmatic competence.

Part One

Chapter One

Introduction

Communicative competence is one of the key-words in linguistics and language

teaching. During the last three decades or so, it has been used so divergently in different contexts that it has ceased to have a precise meaning. Different linguists interpret it in different ways for different purposes. As a result there has been a certain amount of controversy as to what the concept actually comprises, and several models designed by different linguists have attempted to designate what aspects of a language learners need to know in order to be able to communicate effectively in that language.

Communicative competence came into the linguistic literature as a reaction to the concept of "competence", which itself was a subject to many debates.

If an attempt to give a precise definition to the term "competence" is what seems to be most relevant to the beginning the present enquiry, this chapter is only concerned with the discussion of the various features given to the term by Chomsky, with the forewarning that "*attempts to define such focal problems and subject matters are rarely wholly satisfactory*" as explained by Levinson (1983). And indeed, in one sense, the definitions of competence were so myriad that the problem of trying to give one single gathering definition should not be posed at all.

This chapter considers three fundamental issues: Firstly, trying to discuss the difference between "competence" and ultimately "competence in communication" in one hand, and "communicative competence" on the other. Secondly, exposing the different models of communicative competence pointing out to the position pragmatic competence holds in each. And finally, we will point out to the pedagogical

framework which was developed to achieve a communicative objective in a foreign language teaching context.

I. About competence

Before the mid 1960's, competence in a language was defined narrowly in terms of grammatical knowledge. The idea was so influential that most linguists and language experts, while attempting to contribute to any issue concerning the nature of language, related discussions to the distinction "competence/performance". However, those contributions were only built on a theoretical basis. And because of the lack of empirical support for this highly theorized concept, linguists had to have resort to communicative competence which Taylor (1985) qualifies as "*a more realistic substitute to linguistic competence*".

I.1. Langue and competence

The idea of 'competence' in its modern guise has its origin with Chomsky's (1965) distinction of 'competence/performance', itself apparently, as posited by Selinker (1996), a conscious reframing of Saussure's (1922) central dichotomy 'langue/parole'. Hymes (1972) also equates Chomsky's 'competence' with Saussure's 'langue'. He clearly states that "*Chomsky associates his views of competence and performance with the Saussurean concepts of langue and parole.*"(p273).

Nevertheless, this view is not unanimously approved. While it is possible to equate Chomsky's original conception of 'performance' with 'parole' on the ground that

both -in a broad sense- are the actual representation of speech, ‘competence’ and ‘langue’ are different, at least at their level of sociability, because ‘langue’ is a purely social concept, and has nothing to do with the individual. As defined by Saussure (1967): “*Elle est la partie sociale du langage, extérieure à l'individu.*”(p31), while competence is claimed to be more an individual property than a social product (Lyons, 1996).

Moreover, and according to Lyons (1996), it seems that Chomsky himself refuses to identify his notion of ‘competence’ with Saussure’s ‘langue’: In the first section of Aspects of the Theory of Syntax (1965) entitled “Generative Grammars as theories of linguistic competence”, Chomsky added the comment that it was: “…*necessary to reject [Saussure’s] concept of ‘langue’ as merely a systematic inventory of items and to return rather to a conception of underlying competence as a system of generative processes*” . (p 4) Because for Chomsky, the difference between Saussure’s ‘langue’ and his own concept of linguistic (or grammatical) ‘competence’ is the difference between an inventory “*basically a store of signs with their grammatical properties, that is, a store of word-like elements, fixed phrases and perhaps, certain limited phrase-types*” (p23), and an innate system of generative rules.

To sum it up, Chomsky came up with the term competence not as a substitute to Saussure's langue, but as a reaction to it, and so there should be no association of the two terms.

I.2. Chomsky's competence:

Although Saussure's 'langue' is considered as one of the most important linguistic concepts of the 20th century, Chomsky's revolutionary 'competence' found more echo. The reason might be - as supposed by Lyons (1996) - that knowledge of a language - including knowing how to generate an infinite number of sentences from a limited set of grammatical rules (i.e. competence) – is much more important than being in possession of the appropriate language system (i.e. langue).

In his first seminal work Aspects of the Theory of Syntax (1965), Chomsky explicitly introduced his theory of competence with a clear distinction between 'knowledge' and 'ability to use knowledge':

(a)"*Linguistic theory is primarily concerned with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech community who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of language in actual performance.*" (p3).

(b) *"…We thus make a fundamental distinction between competence (the speaker-hearer's knowledge of the language) and performance, the actual use of language in concrete situations*." (p4).

Although this definition has later been criticized of being an "idealised description" of an "ideal" speaker-listener and of a "homogeneous" speech community as an artificial construct, Chomsky succeeded in establishing the basic distinction between

‘competence’ and ‘performance’.

In addition to that, he tries to show that the linguist is more concerned with knowledge than with the use of this knowledge. Because for him, generative grammar “*attempts to characterize in the most neutral possible terms knowledge that provides the basis for actual use of language by a speaker-hearer”* (1965:9), and so his description of language involves no "*explicit reference to the way in which this instrument is put to use…”* (1957:103). He emphasizes “*that what we loosely call 'knowledge of language' involves in the first place knowledge of grammar - indeed that language is a derivative and perhaps not very interesting concept*” (1980:90). He is not then, at this level of defining what he called “competence”, concerned with other dimensions of human language, like variability in the proficiency of language use from one speaker to another or any other grammatically irrelevant condition that is, according to him, out of the scope of syntax .

This view, as remarked by Brown (1984), hypothesizes that competence is logically prior to, and thus more important than performance. This same point has been criticised later on by many linguists, mainly Hymes who posits that Chomsky's conception of competence in particular was far too narrow, leaving performance as a kind of residual 'dustbin' into which all those linguistic phenomena which did not primarily concern Chomsky were swept. He objects in particular the “*absence of a place for socio-cultural factors and the linking of performance to imperfection*” (1972:272).

Although Chomsky made things relatively straightforward, there still seems to be a kind of difficulty in understanding it, for some equate it with proficiency by including the idea of 'ability', something which is not acceptable by many linguists.

Taylor (1988) asserts that by the term ‘competence’ Chomsky is referring exclusively to knowledge, for he writes that : “*The term ‘competence’ entered the technical literature in an effort to avoid the slew of problems relating to “knowledge”, but it is misleading in that it suggests “ability”- an association I would like to sever.”* (p 59). For Chomsky, the idea of 'capacity' or 'ability' has to be excluded because it doesn’t allow us to understand the nature of language:

> *“The notions 'capacity' and 'family of dispositions' are more closely related to behaviour and 'language use’; they do not lead us to inquire into the nature of the 'ghost in the machine' through the study of cognitive structures and their organization…”* (p.23)

Referring to the quotation above, Chomsky equates ‘ability’ with behaviour or ‘actual use’, which he regards as a *“completely different notion from ‘competence’ or ‘knowledge’”*.

Let us now try to draw all the threads that go to make up Chomsky's view of competence: For him, it is a static cognitive state defining the innate knowledge of grammar and not the behavioural process to use this knowledge, and so it could be by no means equated with ability. Because competence is about knowledge then it can be evaluated as any other systematic property of language. The individuals he has in

mind are monolingual native speakers, and subsequently later attempts to apply the concept to non-native speakers or second language learners are fraught with problems.

I.3. Chomsky's competence criticised.

Chomsky's great contribution then was to focus on "linguistic introspection" as commented by Atkinson et al. (1982:369). i.e. His idea of competence is purely theoretical and has nothing to say about language use, language users or even about how this competence is acquired. But language research is not only about theories; it also needs a practical setting and field work to prove the efficiency of those theories. That is the reason why, some linguists found fault with Chomsky's idea. Francis (1980) for example has highlighted some of the difficulties which arise when the Chomskyan conception of competence is applied to the study of child language development, for one thing a child is simply not an 'ideal speaker or hearer', and found that this view of competence doesn't fully cover second or foreign language learning.

Language practitioners consequently felt the need to include some changes by emphasising some elements they felt significant to competence but which Chomsky specifically excluded, giving way to a more general and acceptable concept, embodying both Chomsky's idea and a more socio linguistic aspect of competence. This new notion came to be called communicative competence.

II. Communicative competence

In the 1970's, some linguists and experts in the field of education tried to extend

the concept of competence to cover other elements of language not dealt with by Chomsky. Some theoreticians and language practitioners proved much more effective than others in their analyses of Chomsky's competence and their attempt to give it a social trait in order to remedy its drawbacks, mainly for what concerns its impossibility to be applied out of a theorized context and in real life situations.

II.1. Early sociolinguistic contributions:

It is known that it was Dell Hymes who first coined the term "communicative competence". But before coming up with the term, there had been many socio-linguistic contributions which paved the way for this view. Those contributors first were motivated by the idea of building a new concept covering what they felt missing in Chomsky's competence, mainly the communicative dimension, and so dealing with an extended notion of competence.

Wilkins, Widdowson, Brumfit, Johnson, and many others in the 1970s introduced and elaborated the idea of communicative competence even before Hymes. Then In the 1980s, it took the form of a revolution. Candlin, Littlewood, Ellis, Canale and Swain, Johnson and Porter and Fearch et al., among many others, contributed greatly to the dissemination of this communicative movement to different parts of the globe.

Their first motive was against the subaltern position that Chomsky gave to performance. Hymes holds that "*grammaticalness is only one factor of the many factors that interact to determine acceptability.*" The sources of acceptability, Hymes says, are to be found in the four parameters which will be discussed later and in the

interrelationships among them.

Halliday (1970) for example, added a different perspective to the notion of competence, he argues that only by closely observing the context of the situation are we able to understand the functions of specific grammatical structures:

> *"Linguistics is concerned with the description of speech acts or texts, since only through the study of language in use are all the functions of language, and therefore all components of meaning, brought into focus.*"

In his terms, function is the use to which a grammatical structure is put. It is the purpose of an utterance rather than the particular grammatical form an utterance takes. For Halliday (1970), language performs three basic functions: ideational "*... Language serves for the expression of content",* interpersonal "*…language serves to establish and maintain social relations",* and textual "*language has to provide for making links with itself and with features of the situation in which it is used"* (p.143)

Later, he enumerated seven basic functions that language performs for children learning their first language:

1. The instrumental function: using language to get things;
2. The regulatory function: using language to control the behaviour of others;
3. The interactional function: using language to create interaction with others;
4. The personal function: using language to express personal feelings and meanings;

5. The heuristic function: using language to learn and to discover;

6. The imaginative function: using language to create a world of the imagination;

7. The representational function: using language to communicate information.

It is clear that for Halliday, language is mainly a social instrument; it can perform one of these functions or the other but always for a social purpose.

As Scarcella (1992) explains, the main social view is held by Le Page (1978) for he maintains that:

> *"... A society only exists in the competence of its members to make it work as it does; a language only exists in the competence of those who use and regard themselves as users of that language; and the latter competence is the essential mediating system for the former".* (p41)

Here competence seems to have become an explicitly social construct. Of course he does not reject the importance of the linguistic competence, but he explains that it is only a mediating system for the competence of the whole society.

And so, as already mentioned, before setting on a clear, distinct term covering both the linguistic and the social dimension to language knowledge, competence had to undergo these changes that can be characterised by being attempts to socialize the concept, until Dell Hymes managed to coin "communicative competence" as a separate term and giving it its different parameters .

II.2. Hymes's work

Hymes was among the first to, thoroughly and methodically, investigate the extended notions of competence. His extension of the term involves change and at the same time gives it a much more general character as compared to Chomsky's very precise and narrow use. He exposed his ideas first in a conference paper published in 1971 as *Competence and Performance in Linguistic Theory* and later further elaborated in the more substantial article entitled *On Communicative Competence* (1972). Hymes's premise started from the point that Chomsky's notions of competence and performance left no room to account systematically for the fact that one of the things we know about language is how to use it appropriately.

In his perception of what knowing a language entails, Hymes openly criticizes and tries to recast the scope of Chomsky's competence which dealt primarily with abstract grammatical knowledge. For him, as already explained, Chomsky not only defines competence in a narrow way, but he also has the 'dustbin' view when it comes to performance on the ground that he views it as a subordinate concept. He objects also the absence of a place for socio-cultural factors, something that makes it impossible to talk about competence in an instructional teaching setting.

Another reason of such dissatisfaction was Hymes's observation that the Chomskyan position lacks empirical support: he argues that it posits "*ideal objects in abstraction from socio-cultural features that might enter into their description*" (1968). Lyons also explains that there was dissatisfaction with what he called "*the highly theoretical*

idealized classical Chomskyan notion of competence as a basis for the very practical business of language teaching". According to Lyons, it is almost impossible, out of an idealized context, to speak about a homogeneous speech community, because even within a single speech community there are such things as diglossia and limitations of sentence-level grammar that make differences between members of that same speech community.

Hymes also found fault in Chomsky's theory of competence in the sense that it conflicts his idea of "differential Competence" (1971:7 & 1972:274), which refers to differences among individuals. Scarcella and Oxford (1992) explain that differential Competence in fact introduces a comparative and relative dimension, something which opposes Chomsky's assumption that competence is the property of the individual; this whole discussion of differential competence is socially oriented. Hymes (1972) states that: "*even the ethnographies that we have , though almost never focused on speaking , show us that communities differ significantly in ways of speaking , in patterns of repertoires and switching , in the roles and meanings of speech"* (p33) . In other words, he is saying that different people have different competences and that there is a social dimension to language use - which according to him nobody would deny.

Moreover, language is an interactive system (between speaker/listener or writer/reader) and that meaning is conveyed at a higher level than the sentence. The complex exchanges between participants in the communicative process are imbued

with their ideologies, expectations and attitudes; their shared knowledge about each other and the world and the context of the situation in which they find themselves.

Hymes (1972) also tries to show that Chomsky's competence needs an extension because, as mentioned before, it says nothing about language acquisition. According to him:

> *"....We have to account for the fact that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner. […] This competence, moreover, is integral with attitudes, values and motivations concerning language, its features and uses, and integral with competence for, and attitudes toward, the interrelation of language, with the other codes of communicative conduct"* (277-78).

In other words, he tries to explain that the ability to speak competently not only entails knowing the grammar of a language but also knowing what to say to whom, when and in what circumstances. In his perspective (1972) "*there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless*"(p.45).

Therefore, for Hymes the general term competence covers a number of different elements, varying from grammatical knowledge on the one hand to sociolinguistic knowledge on the other; and by claiming so, he gives his new concept of competence a more general character. This is very deliberate on Hymes's part as it is apparent when he says: "*I should therefore take competence as the most general term for the*

speaking and hearing capabilities of a person." (1971:16), and by the term general he also means performance or at least some of its aspects.

Speaking about performance, and According to Taylor (1985), Hymes notes that some aspects of what Chomsky lumps together under performance are systematic and can be described in the form of rules, and can thus be seen as a form of competence. Chomsky himself (1980) later acknowledged this, when in addition to 'grammatical competence' he recognized 'pragmatic competence', which he conceives as "*underlying the ability to make use of the knowledge characterized as grammatical competence*" (p59). He later elaborates as follows:

> "*For purposes of enquiry and exposition, we may proceed to distinguish 'grammatical competence' from 'pragmatic competence,' restricting the first to the knowledge of form and meaning and the second to knowledge of conditions and manner of appropriate use, in conformity with various purposes. […]. The grammar thus expresses grammatical competence. A system of rules and principles constituting pragmatic competence determines how the tool can effectively be put to use*". (p224)

Clearly this corresponds very largely to what Hymes had in mind when talking about 'competence for use' (1971:19 and 1972:279) as a component of his overall concept of communicative competence. Indeed, he says that:

> "*There are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless. Just as rules of syntax can control aspects of phonology, and just as rules of semantics perhaps control aspects of syntax, so rules of speech acts enter as a controlling factor for*

linguistic form as a whole". (1972:278)

Here, he seems to be saying much the same as Chomsky above. This, then, is the positive side of Hymes's contribution. He has succeeded in tightening up the concept of performance, isolating from it that aspect which can be "characterized by a certain system of rules represented in the mind" (Chomsky 1980:59), and so showing that there are certain aspects of language use that can be explained in terms of underlying knowledge which we can represent as a system of rules.

All in all, Hymes makes a difference in not only reading into Chomsky's definition of competence, but also in coming up with a new term. A term that applies to something that Chomsky would see as biologically based (grammatical competence) and at the same time to a kind of knowledge much more socially based (sociolinguistic competence). The former is purely individual, the latter is mainly social. The former concerns form, the latter concerns function. The former characterizes a state, the latter involves processes. This new term is communicative competence.

II.3. Definition of communicative competence

According to Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics (1983), communicative competence means: "*the ability not only to apply the grammatical rules of a language in order to form grammatically correct sentences but also to know when and where to use these sentences and to whom*". (p49)

Brown (1994) states, "*Communicative Competence then is that aspect of our*

competence that enables us to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts." (p227).

II.3.1. Hymes's definition of communicative competence

Hymes (1967) defined "communicative competence as follows:

> *"Communicative competence is experience-derived knowledge that allows speakers to produce utterances (or texts) that are not only syntactically correct and accurate in their meaning but also socially appropriate in culturally determined communication contexts. Communicative competence also allows speakers to understand the speech (or texts) of their communication partners as a function of both the structural and referential characteristics of the discourse and the social context in which it occurs".*

According to him , the term 'communicative competence' labels the ability to produce situationally, and more especially, socially acceptable utterances , which in Hymes's view , would normally be held to be part of the speaker's competence in a particular language .

The distinction between the "linguistic/communicative competences" made by Hymes (1972) also helped to clarify the domain of performance and to isolate the systematic nature of some of the conditions governing language use: he includes what he called "the ability for use", which is the individual's underlying potential to realize a possible, feasible and appropriate speech act, and not the actual performance. So the term "performance" according to Hymes refers to "actual use and actual events" and "ability for use". To make that clear, Shohamy states Mc Namara's account for ability for use. He suggests that:

"*Ability for use is a difficult term to grasp because a range of cognitive and effective factors involved in performance of communicative tasks (e.g. general reasoning power, emotional states and personality factors) must be considered. And since these factors are not language exclusive, they are not unique to language specialists, and therefore have not been addressed in the language field".*

Hymes's contribution to the development of the idea of competence and performance is a curious mixture of both positive and negative features. He is, as discussed by Taylor, quite right to criticize Chomsky's original notion of performance, pointing out that the notions of 'theory of performance' and 'theory of language use' are equated under the catch-all term of 'performance', but at the same time, Taylor deplores "*the distorting effect of using the one term 'performance' for two distinct things, of the correlative withholding of 'competence' from the second of them*" (1971:11).

II.3.2. Components of Communicative competence:

The definition of Longman mentioned above seems to clearly state that communicative competence is made up of four major components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. This definition is actually based on Hymes's view (1972), for he asserts that "a person who acquires communicative competence acquires both knowledge and ability for language use with respect to:

1. *Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible.*

2. *Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available.*

3. *Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated.*

4. *Whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doing entails.* (p281)

Although Hymes's view of language is primarily sociolinguistic, it also addresses issues of language acquisition. What Hymes has done then, is to "*extend the notion of competence as tacit knowledge from grammar to speaking as a whole*'(1971:16). This involves also, as we have seen, incorporating the notion of 'ability' and introducing a social dimension.

II.4. Subsequent developments of communicative competence

The concept of communicative competence found a very considerable echo among linguists and educationists, especially those who espouse a rather socio-linguistic orientation to language teaching. Many of them have tried to define it following Hymes's course, but it is interesting to mention that some sociolinguists have even gone further than Hymes in this respect.

Savignon (1985) for example was one of those who worked on communicative competence, she quiet agrees with his forerunner in dividing the concept into four components. She views communicative competence as:

"...the ability to function in a truly communicative setting - that is a dynamic exchange

in which linguistic competence must adapt itself to the total information input, both linguistic and paralinguistic of one or more interlocutors". (P 130)

So Savignon's view of communicative competence is not far from what Hymes theorised before her. The only difference would be her view of performance which, according to her, is not part of the individual's competence but a completely different concept:

"There is a theoretical difference between competence and performance. Competence is defined as presumed underlying ability, and performance as the overt manifestation of that ability. Competence is what one knows. Performance is what one does. Only performance is observable, however, and it is only through performance that competence can be developed, maintained and evaluated".

Widdowson's (1998) contribution is also of an influential importance, he gave the definition:

"Communicative competence is not a matter of knowing rules for the composition of sentences. It is much more a matter of knowing a stock of partially pre-assembled patterns, formulaic frameworks, and a kit of rules, so to speak, and being able to apply the rules to make whatever adjustments are necessary according to contextual demands". (p325)

This means that communicative competence does entail what Chomsky called 'grammatical competence' but only to a very limited degree. It doesn't stop at the level of knowing the patterns and rules governing a language but transcends this to involve knowledge about the contextual demands. To put it in Widdowson's terms,

"*Communicative competence is essentially a matter of adaptation, and rules are not generative but regulative and subservient"* (p325).

One of the other most extensive subsequent discussions of competence is provided by Munby (1978) who is concerned with developing the communicative competence of the second language user. Like that of Hymes, he specifically includes some notion of 'ability' for he says:

> *"It seems clear that communicative competence includes the ability to use linguistic forms to perform communicative acts and to understand the communicative functions of sentences and their relationships to other sentences"*
>
> (p26).

Canale and Swain's (1980) contribution to the concept of communicative competence was also influential. They view communication as the exchange and negotiation of information between at least two individuals through verbal and non-verbal means, and so they describe communicative competence as "*the underlying systems of knowledge of vocabulary and skill in using the sociolinguistic conventions for a given language*." They first make a distinction between knowledge of use which stands for "communicative competence" and a demonstration of this knowledge which is performance. Canale says that communicative competence comprises both knowledge and skills in using acquired knowledge when interacting in actual communication. Knowledge, according to him, means what one knows (consciously or unconsciously) about the language and about other aspects of life and the world,

and skill refers to how well one can perform.

II.4.A. Canale and Swain's model:

According to their definition of communicative competence, Canale and Swain suggested a model which has come to subsume four sub- competences:

II.4.A.1. Grammatical competence: which refers to mastery of the language code at the sentence level, e.g. vocabulary, word formation, sentence formation, pronunciation, spelling and linguistic semantics' vocabulary and word formation. These features focus directly on the knowledge and skills required in understanding and expressing accurately the literal meaning of utterances. As such, grammatical competence is considered an important concern for any second language programme.

II.4.A.2. Sociolinguistic competence: according to Canale, it includes socio-cultural rules of language use.

> "*…It addresses the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on contextual factors such as status of participants, purposes of the interaction, and norm or conventions of interaction*".

Appropriateness here refers to appropriateness of both form and meaning.

II.4.A.3. Discourse competence is about '*mastery of how to combine grammatical*

forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres'. It is concerned with:

(a) Knowledge of text forms, semantic relations and an organised knowledge of the world.
(b) Cohesion (structural links to create meaning).
(c) Coherence, which is the link between different meanings in a text: literal, social meanings and communicative functions.

II.4.A.4. Strategic competence: deals with '*mastery of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action.*' It is concerned with *"improving the effectiveness of communication, and compensating for breakdowns in communication.*" (p34)

Here, it is worth mentioning that strategic competence means something very different in Bachman and Palmer (1996), namely, meta-cognitive strategies, which is central to communication. For these authors "language ability" consists of "language knowledge" and "meta-cognitive strategies"

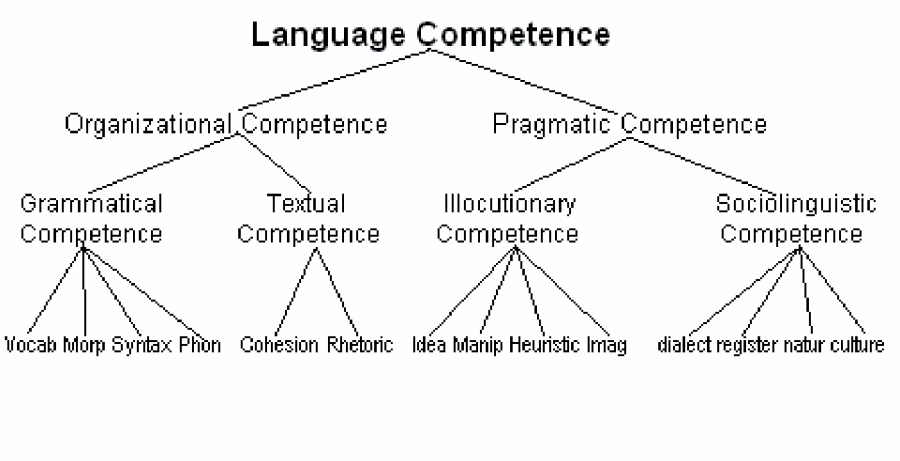
II.4.B. Bachman's model:

Canale and Swain's (1980) definition and division of Communicative Competence has undergone some modifications. The evolution can be best captured in Bachman's (1990) schematisation of what he simply calls language competence. According to Bachman, what he calls "communicative language ability" consists of both knowledge, or competence and the capacity for implementing that competence in

appropriate contextualised communicative language use.

Bachman's framework of communicative language ability has three components: (a) language competence, (b) strategic competence, and (c) psycho-physiological mechanism.

He provides a diagram in which he first divides language competence into (a) organisational competence, and (b) pragmatic competence.



Bachman's (1990) components of language competence are different from Canale and Swain's (1983). Bachman has put the grammatical and discourse competence under one 'mode' which he calls organisational competence. The discourse competence is now called textual competence. Here all those rules and system that tells us what we can do with the terms of language, whether they are sentence level rules (grammar) or rules that govern how we 'string' sentences together are put under organisational competence. Whereas for pragmatic competence, Canale and Swain's sociolinguistic competence is now divided into two separate pragmatic categories:

illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence. Illocutionary competence is referring to sending and receiving intended meanings. Sociolinguistic competence refers -according to Richards and Rodgers (1986)- to "*an understanding of the social context in which communication takes place, including role relationships, the shared information of the participants and their communicative purpose for their interaction*" (p71).

Bachman went a step further, he added strategic competence but he puts it as an entirely separate element of communicative language ability. The strategic competence as he views it "*acts or serves as an 'executive' function of making the final decision among many possible options or wording, phrasing and other productive and receptive means for negotiating meaning*" (1990:85). Strategic competence according to Bachman is a set of general abilities that utilise all the elements of language competence.

Looking at Bachman's components of language competence, we can clearly see that we need to focus on all the components so as not to risk failing to deal with a major part of whatever constitutes communicative competence. All components are of equal importance though the focus towards communicative competence maybe for the students to be able to communicate orally. And as Hymes (1971) states: "*communicative competence, thus formulated will include formal competence, but will extend that to embrace knowledge of the rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless*". (P15)

III. Communicative competence and foreign language teaching

The works of Hymes, Savignon, Canal and Swain and others on the theoretical basis for communicative competence, and the rapid acceptance of such a new principle urged language educationists to apply it on language teaching, and this is what led to what came to be known as the communicative approach or simply communicative language teaching (notional functional approach) .

Since communicative ability is a complex and many-sided phenomenon, then communicative language teaching is also very complex. But because it is not the main concern of the present investigation, we will just summarize a number of general factors which, together, contribute towards the overall communicative approach to foreign language teaching.

III.1. Methodological framework of communicative language teaching

An important methodological distinction in communicative language learning has been that between “pre-communicative” and “communicative learning activities”. This methodological framework can be represented diagrammatically as follows:

The layout of the diagram illustrates the familiar progression from ‘controlled practice’ to ‘creative language use’. it does not necessarily show the “temporal sequencing” of such activities within a teaching it is intended to show the “methodological relationship” between different types of activity.

The Pre-communicative activities’ essential function is to prepare the learner for later communication by practicing certain language forms or functions, and will lead into communicative work, during which the learners can use the new language they have acquired.

III.2. Focus on form and focus on meaning

The most important variable in the methodological framework summarized above is the varying degree to which the different activities encourage learners to focus on (a) linguistic forms to be practiced, or (b) meanings to be conveyed.

Since communicative competence development focuses primarily on the individual speaker’s communicative ability rather than on its linguistic form, so we can say that the goal of foreign language teaching (from a communicative perspective) is to extend the range of communication situations in which the learner can perform with focus on meaning, without being hindered by the attention he must pay to linguistic form. In relation to this goal, the roles of the two main categories of activity can be summarized as follows:

1. Pre-communicative activities aim to give the learners fluent control over linguistic forms. Although the activities may emphasize the links between forms and meanings, the main criterion for success is whether the learner produces acceptable language.

2. In communicative activities, the production of linguistic forms becomes subordinate to higher-level decisions, related to the communication of meanings. The learner is thus expected to increase his skill in starting from an intended meaning. Selecting suitable language forms from his total repertoire, and producing them fluently. The criterion for success is whether the meaning is conveyed effectively.

III.3. The role of the teacher

To many teachers, not correcting errors might appear to conflict with their pedagogical role, which has traditionally required them to evaluate all learners' performance according to clearly defined criteria. Certainly, it suggests that a communicative approach involves the teacher in redefining, to some extent, this traditional role.

The teacher must be prepared to subordinate his own behavior to the learning needs of his students. This includes recognizing that learning does not only take place as a direct result of his own instruction. There are some aspects of learning that can take place more efficiently if, once he has initiated an activity, he takes no further part in it, but leaves full scope to his students' spontaneous learning processes.

The concept of the teacher as ‘instructor’ is thus inadequate to describe his overall function. In a broad sense, he is a ‘facilitator of learning’, and may need to perform in a variety of specific roles, separately or simultaneously, Such as: general overseer of his students’ learning, classroom manager (responsible for grouping activities into ‘lessons’ and for ensuring that these are satisfactorily organized at the practical level, or can sometimes participates in an activity as ‘co communicator’ with the learners.

III.4. Psychological factors in the classroom

Since the developmental processes of the communicative ability occur inside the learner, a crucial factor in helping or hindering them is the learner’s psychological state.

It is all too easy for a foreign language classroom to create inhibitions and anxiety. it is not uncommon to find a teaching situation where the learners occupy a permanent position of inferiority before a critical audience, with little opportunity for asserting their own individuality. And so many learners will prefer to keep a ‘low profile’, in the hope that they will not be called upon to participate openly.

The development of communicative skills can only take place if learners have motivation and opportunity to express their own identity and to relate with the people around them. It therefore requires a learning atmosphere which gives them a sense of security and value as individuals. In turn, this atmosphere depends to a large extent on the existence of interpersonal relationships which do not create inhibitions, but are

supportive and accepting.

The encouragement of such relationships is an essential concern of a communicative approach to foreign language teaching. Clearly, it is a concern which cannot be satisfied through methodology alone, since it involves a wide range of personality factors and interpersonal skills

In short, communicative teaching methods leave the learner scope to contribute his own personality to the learning process. They also provide the teacher with scope to step out of his didactic role in order to be a ‘human among humans’.

Conclusion

Communicative competence came as a reaction to Chomsky’s competence, which was seen by socio-linguists and educationists as loaded with drawbacks. The main difference between the two concepts, in addition to the sociability of the second, is that "competence" refers exclusively to knowledge, whereas the second includes both knowledge and ability to use this knowledge in its appropriate context.

when it comes to an attempt to evaluate learners’ (and foreign language learners’) competence about a language, which is the case of this study, "competence in communication" - formulated this way- is a more appropriate term than "communicative competence" on the ground that the first deals with something measurable (knowledge), whereas the latter suggests a set of behaviours which need to be taken into account, and so hard to surround.

As various models of communicative competence make apparent, communicating effectively and efficiently in any given language requires more than just linguistic knowledge. The ability to use this linguistic knowledge appropriately in the given socio-cultural context is also essential. Hence, in order to understand and be understood in interactions, learners need to develop a very indispensable, yet long neglected aspect of language ability which language experts refer to as pragmatic competence.

In response to the need for more research on pragmatics and pragmatic competence, the following chapter attempts to review some papers and works written on the subject, hoping first to draw attention to the importance it has in modals of communicative competence, and then to form a platform for a humble study to show to what extent FLT in general and third year students of Biskra university can benefit from those programs designed to develop pragmatic competence.

Part one

Chapter Two.

Introduction

Before talking about pragmatic competence and the place it holds in different models of communicative competence, there are reasons for attempting at least some indications of the scope of pragmatics: In the first place, pragmatics is simply a sufficiently unfamiliar term. In the second place, it seems that there is much work scattered throughout the various journals and articles of linguistics and language teaching, but no two give it a unified explanation. This made some authors suggest that it has no coherent field at all. As an example to this, Searle, Kiefer & Bierwisch (1980) suggest that "*Pragmatics is one of those words -societal and cognitive are others- that give the impression that something quite specific and technical is being talked about where often in fact it has no clear meaning"* (VIII). Pragmaticists were thus challenged to show, at least within the linguistic tradition, that the term does have a clear application. For this reason, it seems suitable to consider a set of possible definitions of pragmatics, accounting at the same time for the deficiencies and advantages of each.

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce pragmatics and ultimately pragmatic competence. In the fist section, the pragmatic perspective is introduced, starting with a brief historical overview of how it ended up as a linguistic subfield. Then we review some definitions which, while being less than fully satisfactory, will at least serve to indicate the broad scope of linguistic pragmatics and some of its usages. Afterward, we try to make distinctions between the term and the other fields to which it has long

been associated. The second section focuses on pragmatic competence, trying at first place to review some of its definitions and secondly to account for the place it holds in different models of communicative competence, and finally to divide it into its different components.

I. The pragmatic point of view

As the different models of communicative competence discussed in the previous chapter make apparent, an individual's ability to communicate effectively is not solely dependent on his or her knowledge of the linguistic structures of the language. Rather, effective communication also includes the speaker's ability to use the language appropriately in different situations, depending on factors such as setting, context, and the relationships between speakers **(**Washburn, 2001**)**. These factors, in addition to common speech routines such as apologizing, requesting, refusing, complaining, giving and responding to compliments are part of what is referred to as pragmatics.

I.A.Origins and historical background

Although pragmatics is a relatively new branch in linguistics, the word itself can be dated back to ancient Greece and Rome where the term "pragmaticus" is found in late Latin and "pragmaticos" in Greek, both meaning 'being practical'.

The notion, throughout its development, has been steered by the philosophical practice of pragmatism. Richard Rorty, one of the founders of the philosophical concept, tries to generalise it over the field of language when he claims that:

"..We are mistaken if we think of language as a representation of some external world. Rather, language is a form of negotiation with others for the purpose of life. Concepts only have sense in terms of our expectations and desires for and with others. Context is positive and inescapable"

Still, Rotary's idea of pragmatism did not find echo among language practitioners. Modern use and current practice of pragmatics –as a linguistic subfield- is credited to the influence of the philosopher Charles Morris and his interpretation of semiotics and verbal communication studies in *Foundations of the Theory of Signs* (1938) which helped neatly expound linguistic pragmatics in a more explicit way than pragmatism did.

This Anglo-American tradition of pragmatic study has been tremendously expanded and enriched with the involvement of researchers from other countries. A symbol of this development was the establishment of the I.Pr.A (the International Pragmatic Association) in Antwerp in1987. In its Working Document, IPrA proposed to consider pragmatics as a theory of linguistic adaptation and look into language use from all dimensions (Verschueren, 1987). Henceforward, pragmatics has been conceptualized as to incorporate micro and macro components. (Mey, 1993).

I.B. Defining pragmatics

A traditional criticism has been that pragmatics does not have a clear-cut focus. In early studies, there was a tendency to assort some of its relevant topics without a clear

status. Thus pragmatics was associated with the metaphor of ‘a garbage can' (Leech, 1983), because the attempts to define it did only gather the study elements not dealt with in the other disciplines. But In many ways, all the influential definitions agree that it is the study of invisible meaning, the study of the intended meaning, or how we recognize what is meant even when it is not said or written.

We owe what is arguably the most commonly used conception of pragmatics -complementary to syntax and semantics- to Morris, who was concerned to outline the general shape of ‘the science of signs’ or semiotics. Within semiotics, Morris distinguished three separate branches of inquiry: Syntactics (or syntax), being “*the study of the formal relation of signs to one another*”; Semantics, which is “*the study of the relations of signs to the objects to which the signs are applicable*” (their designata), and Pragmatics, the study of “*the relation of signs to interpreters*” (1938:6)

After the initial Morrisian usage, Carnap(1938), with the intention of clarifying the relationship between the three concepts, adopted the following version of the trichotomy:

> “*If in an investigation explicit reference is made to the speaker , or to put it in more general terms, to the user of the language, then we assign it (the investigation) to the field of pragmatics […] if we abstract from the user of the language and analyze only the expressions and their designata, we are in the field of semantics. And finally, if we*

abstract from the designata also and analyze only the relations between the expressions, we are in (logical) syntax". (p.2)

This definition, while criticised for its vagueness, constitutes a way of centring pragmatics, at least in general terms**.**

In the same way; the concept has been a subject to a successive narrowing of scope, and many linguists have attempted to limit pragmatics and to indicate what position it holds in linguistics.

One definition that is particularly useful -according to Kasper (1997) - is the one proposed by David Crystal in 1985. According to him:

"*Pragmatics is the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication*" (p.240).

Levinson (1983) also defines pragmatics as "*the study of the ability of language users to pair sentences with the contexts in which they would be appropriate*" (p24). Or, as defined by Prof. He Gang (2003): "*Pragmatics is a discipline of interpretive science which is designed to understand utterances from a context-dependent point of view*".

But the problem with these "non-restrictive definitions", as referred to by Levinson (1983), is that they do not seem to draw a clear boundary between pragmatics on the one hand and other "interpretive sciences" or social interactional approaches to

language study, nor they do seem to focus on what is particular with pragmatics. That is why the concept needs to be defined in relation some adjacent notions.

I.C. Pragmatics and related notions

What has come to be called "pragmatics" was seen, not as a discipline with a particular orientation but as a confluence of trends or currents having various origins. And so the problem of determining boundaries in relation to other aspects of language and communication has been a recurring one.

In an attempt to delineate pragmatics from these other aspects and other neighbouring concepts -namely, language structure, socio-linguistics, semantics, context and discourse analysis - Prof. He Gang in his article Defining Cultural Pragmatics (2003) explains that "*one way of centering pragmatics is to come up with a definitions "by intention"*", i.e. by naming the criteria according to which it does, or does not, form part of the whole linguistic discipline. And one needs to compare their scope of study and to see what different contributions they bring to linguistics.

I.C.1. Pragmatics and language structure

Some definitions in the literature specifically aim at capturing the concern of pragmatics with features of language structure. To sate an example, Levinson (1983) writes that: "*Pragmatics is the study of those relations between language and context that are grammaticalized, or encoded in the structure of a language*".(p.)

"Grammaticalization" here, as explained by Levinson, is used in the broad sense

covering the encoding of meaning distinctions -again in a wide sense- in the lexicon, morphology, syntax and phonology of languages. Or, putting it another way, Levinson says that pragmatics is the study of just those aspects of the relationship between language and context that are relevant to the writing of grammars.

This explanation stands in strong contrast to Katz & Fodor's proposal that would restrict pragmatics to the study of grammatically irrelevant aspects of language usage. Katz & Fodor (1963) suggest that a theory of pragmatics - or a theory of "Setting selection" as they then called it - would essentially be concerned with the disambiguation of sentences by the contexts in which they were uttered. They claim that grammar - including phonology, syntax and semantics - is concerned with the context-free assignment of meaning to linguistic forms, while pragmatics is concerned with the further interpretation of those forms in a context:

> *"[Grammars] are theories about the structure of sentence types. […]. Pragmatic theories, in contrast, do nothing to explicate the structure of linguistic constructions or grammatical properties and relations [...]; they explicate the reasoning of speakers and hearers in working out the correlation in a context of a sentence token with a proposition…"* (Katz, 1977: 19).

Katz's definition for pragmatics may have the possible advantage of effectively delimiting the field, and excluding semantics' concern. In short it would bind Morris's and Carnap's definitions more than Levinson's one.

I.C.2. Pragmatics, semantics, meaning, and context

Where questions of grammar were the point of departure, the route that led to pragmatics was also through the inadequacy of semantic theory when confronted with the problem of context of use. An extreme criticism represented by Marshal (cited in Shi Cun, 1989) was that pragmatics is not eligible as an independent field of learning since meaning is already dealt with in semantics.

Levinson (1983) replies to this statement by an extended discussion of the issue, and came up with the conclusion that: "*Pragmatics is the study of all those aspects of meaning not captured in semantic theory*"(p.). Or, putting it another way, "*pragmatics is meaning minus semantics*". This suggests that that there are some meaning facets left unaccounted by semantics and which pragmatics takes into charge.

According to Leech (1983)

> "*Meaning in pragmatics is defined relative to a speaker or user of the language, whereas meaning in semantics is defined purely as a property of expressions in a given language, in abstraction from particular situations, speakers, or hearers.*"

We may find such a conceptual unity by making the distinction between Grice's (1975) "sentence meaning" and "speaker meaning" (or "utterance meaning" as put by Bar-Hillel). Hence, drawing the line between sentence and utterance is of fundamental importance. Essentially, a sentence is an abstract theoretical entity defined within grammar, while an utterance is an issuance of a sentence, a sentence

analogue or sentence fragment, in an actual context. Noting that Context, within the framework of pragmatics, is defined by leech (1983) as "*any background knowledge assumed to be shared by S (addresser) and H (addressee) and which contributes to his interpretation of what S means by a given utterance*" (p13).

Empirically, the relation between an utterance and the corresponding sentence maybe quiet obscure (e.g. the utterance maybe elliptical (indirect, oblique) or contain sentence fragments or false starts), but it is customary, after Bar-Hillel, to think of an utterance as the pairing of a sentence and the context in which it was uttered. In this sense, we should take pragmatics as being concerned with utterance meaning while semantics with sentence meaning. And when the pragmatic implications of an utterance do not match the context, then in general the utterance is not treated as in any way inappropriate, rather the pragmatic implications are simply assumed not to hold.

Another way of distinguishing between the two of them (what) should be in terms of input and output. Levinson (1983) states Katz's (1977) attempt at clarifying the issue in terms of input and output. He suggests that:

> *"The input should be the full grammatical (including semantical) description of a sentence, together with information about the context in which it was uttered, while the output is a set of representations which capture the full meaning of the utterance in the context specified"* (p.19).

Since a sentence plus its context of use can be called an utterance, Katz's suggestion amounts to the idea that a pragmatic theory is a function which domain is the set of utterances focusing on context in language understanding .

Sketching all these formulations together, we could put all these variables in these definitions: pragmatics is 'meaning minus semantics' or 'it is the contribution of context to language understanding'.

I.C.3. Pragmatics and sociolinguistics

Most commentators would agree that it is no easy task to define where pragmatics ends and sociolinguistics begins. One famous quote from Roman Jakobson:

> "*if we were to accept that nothing linguistic is foreign to us, perhaps we could also admit, firstly, that the sociolinguistic point of view cannot be foreign to pragmatics (we run the risk, otherwise, of creating a sort of angelic or a-social, grammar-like pragmatics) and secondly, that the pragmatic point of view has to be included in sociolinguistics and its approaches (to avoid a sociolinguistic bereft of communicative phenomena).*

This means first that Jakobson sees that pragmatics in its very origin is part of the socio-linguistic view, and this is demonstrated through the different modals of communicative competence accounted for in the previous chapter, and all those aspects of pragmatics were mainly accepted as socio-linguistc until pragmatics separated. That's why till now, many find it difficult to put a clear cut between the

two concepts.

As already discussed, the original Canale and Swain framework comprised three components - grammatical, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence. At first glance, this trinity suggests a relevant absence, which prompted Schachter (1990) to ask: '*Where does pragmatics fit into the Canale and Swain framework? Is it assumed not to exist?*' (p. 42). But a quick look at how sociolinguistic competence was operationalized in the project gives the answer. Because Sociolinguistic ability was defined by canale and swain as '*the ability to produce and recognize socially appropriate language in context*' (p. 14), something which includes requests, offers, and complaints produced in oral role-plays. With This selection of contextually appropriate realizations of speech acts in a multiple choice format, pragmatics was included in the framework; it had just not yet come to its own name.

Pragmatic competence is thus an aspect of the broader areas both of social competence and of competence in discourse.

I.C.4. pragmatics and discourse

Discourse is concerned with stretches of language, which go beyond the sentence level and constitute a recognisable communicative event. A conversation is one such event (Crystal, 1985). Since whether some aspect of communication is appropriate or inappropriate is dependent on its relevance to context, pragmatic relevance needs to take place within the framework of a whole discourse, and not within the framework of individual units such as sentences, which have been isolated from context.

Pragmatic skills are therefore concerned with discourse. However, not all discourse or conversational skills are pragmatic. McTear and Conti-Ramsden (1989) gave the example of Story telling, he explains that it is a discourse skill and aspects of telling a story, such as specifying topic and establishing referent, are clearly pragmatic (Zubrick & Olley, 1987). Other aspects, however, like the ability to focus on a character and the character's motivations, goals, plans and actions, are not. (Hedberg, 1986, p. 59) the same goes for the use of a concept of theme (Yoshinaga-Itano, 1986). To tell a story with an immature or poorly developed use of theme or of characterisation is not in itself to use language inappropriately.

The assumption that all discourse level skills are pragmatic is a potential source of confusion when attempting to delineate pragmatic deficit.

I. D. The goal of pragmatics

What is then original about the pragmatic view and which is not found in other neighboring views is not one thing in particular, but rather the sum of traits and interests: emphasis on the speakers, the links between text and context, the will to explain meaning (beyond the level of sentences), the need to explain functional variation in particular, and variation and diversity in general…etc. Pragmaticians are also keen on exploring why interlocutors can successfully converse with one another. All this has given different shades and nuances to the various orientations within pragmatics.

To sum up the discussion, we have considered a number of rather different delimitations of the field. The most promising according to Levinson(1983) are the definitions that equate pragmatics with ‘meaning minus semantics’, or with a theory of language understanding that takes context into account, in order to complement the contribution that semantics makes to meaning.

In any case, we embarked on this definitional enterprise with the warning that satisfactory definitions of academic fields are rarely available, and the purpose was simply to sketch the sorts of concerns, and the sorts of boundary issues, with which pragmaticists are implicitly concerned.

I.E. Interests of pragmatics

One other possibility of defining pragmatics is to retreat to an ostensive or extensional definition, i.e. simply to provide a list of the phenomena for which a pragmatic theory must account. But here also, the lack of a clear consensus appears in the way that no two published accounts list the same categories of pragmatics with the same importance.

But among the concepts which have been very present over the course of the entire history of pragmatics we have: Speech act theory, Conversational implicature, presupposition, conversational structure, Deixis and so on. Still, we have to mention that alongside those traditional subject areas, there have been others that have come to the fore more recently, like politeness, or are complete newcomers, like

multimodality, or the confluence between different channels and communicative codes.

Based on the work undertaken by Levinson (1983), one of the central extensional definitions to pragmatics might run as follows: *"Pragmatics is the study of Deixis (at least in part), implicature, Presupposition, Speech Acts and aspects of discourse structure."*(p.)

This list would certainly provide a reasonable indication of some central topics in pragmatics, but it scarcely helps those unfamiliar with these topics, for it imposes the same problem experienced in the earlier attempts at definition. In addition to that, it provides no criteria for the inclusion or exclusion of further phenomena that may come to our attention.

So to reduce excessive diversity resulting in vagueness or imprecision, we are going to limit ourselves to the elements cited in most pragmatics' published works, and which are: Speech Acts, Conversational Implicatures, and Deixis.

I. E.1. Speech Acts

The philosopher J.L. Austin (1911-1960) claims that many utterances are equivalent to actions, because the utterance creates a new social or psychological reality. That's why he called these utterances "speech acts".

Speech act theory broadly explains these utterances as having three parts or forces:

a. Locutionary acts: are simply the speech acts that have taken place.

b. Illocutionary acts: are the real actions which are performed by the utterance,

where saying equals doing, as in betting, welcoming and warning.

Some linguists even have gone further in this respect when attempting at classifying illocutionary acts into a number of categories or types. David Crystal (1985), quoting J.R. Searle, gives five categories:

1 *Representatives: where the speaker asserts a proposition to be true, using such verbs as: affirm, believe, conclude, deny, report…,*
2 *Directives: here the speaker tries to make the hearer do something, with such words as: ask, beg, challenge, command, dare, invite, insist, request….*
3 *Commissives: here the speaker commits himself (or herself) to a (future) course of action, with verbs such as: guarantee, pledge, promise, swear, vow, undertake….*
4 *Expressives: the speaker expresses an attitude to or about a state of affairs, using such verbs as: apologize, appreciate, congratulate, deplore, detest, regret, thank, welcome…*
5 *Declarations: where the speaker alters the external status or condition of an object or situation solely by making an utterance.*

c. Perlocutionary acts: which are the effects of the utterance on the listener, who accepts the bet or pledge, is welcomed or warned.

When the speech act is the utterance of the right words by the right person in the right situation and effectively accomplishes the social act, we call it a “Performative”. In some cases, this special speech act is accompanied by a ceremonial or ritual action. I.e. there are social realities that can be enacted by speech, because we all accept the

status of the speaker in the appropriate situation.

The conditions necessary to the success of a speech act or achievement of a performative are called “felicity conditions”.

Loosely speaking, felicity conditions are of three kinds: Preparatory conditions (the status or authority of the speaker to perform the speech act), Conditions for execution (ritual or ceremonial action accompanying the speech act), and Sincerity conditions (which show that the speaker must really intend what he or she says).

Felicity conditions can be explained by the “hereby” test, which is a simple but crude way to decide whether a speech act is of such a kind that we can aptly call it a performative: it consists of inserting the word “hereby” between subject and verb. If the resulting utterance makes sense, then the speech act is probably a performative.

I. E.2. Conversational Implicature

In a series of lectures at Harvard University in 1967, the English language philosopher H.P. Grice outlined an approach to what he termed “Conversational Implicature” explaining how hearers manage to work out the complete message when speakers mean more than what they say. In other words, the conversational implicature is a message that is not found in the plain sense of the sentence, and can be understood only if:

1 The addresser and the addressee share the common understanding of the contextual forces, which presupposes also an understanding of sentence meaning.

2 The speaker is obeying what Grice calls the cooperative principle.

I.E.2.a. Conversational Maxims and the Cooperative Principle

Paul Grice proposes that the success of a conversation depends upon the various speakers' approaches to the interaction. The way in which people try to make conversations work is called "the cooperative principle". The principle can be explained by four underlying rules or maxims that David Crystal calls "conversational maxims". When these maxims are violated an implicature -a proposition implied by an utterance- arises.

The Gricean maxims are:

1 Quality: Grice formulated them as follows:

2 Do not say what you believe to be false.

3 Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

4 Quantity:

5 Make your contribution as informative as required.

6 Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

7 Relevance (or relation):

8 Speakers' contributions should relate clearly to the purpose of the exchange.

Some linguists (such as Howard Jackson and Peter Stockwell, who call it a "Supermaxim") single out relevance as of greater importance than Grice recognised (Grice gives quality and manner as supermaxims).

In analysing utterances and searching for relevance we can use a hierarchy of

propositions – those that might be asserted, presupposed, entailed or inferred from any utterance.

a. Assertion: what is asserted is the obvious, plain or surface meaning of the utterance (though many utterances are not assertions of anything.)
b. Presupposition: what is taken for granted in the utterance.
c. Entailments: logical or necessary corollaries (consequences) of an utterance.
d. Inferences: are interpretations that other people draw from the utterance, for which we cannot always directly account.

5 Manner: they are formulated by Grice as follows:

2 Avoid obscurity of expression.
3 Avoid ambiguity.
4 Be brief.
5 Be orderly.

Grice does not prescribe the use of such maxims. Nor does he suggest that we use them to construct conversations. But they are useful for analysing and interpreting conversations, and may reveal purposes of which -either as speaker or listener- we were not previously aware of. Very often, we communicate particular non-literal meanings by appearing to "violate" or "flout" (disobey) these maxims.

Remark: It must be kept in mind however, that while many researchers assume Grice's maxims to be universal, these maxims are not implemented and interpreted in the same way across cultures. Keenan (1976), for example, pointed out that Grice's first sub-maxim Quantity, *be informative*, (e.g., *She's either in the house or at the*

market) is inappropriate in the Malagasy society of Madagascar. Due to a fear of committing oneself to an assertion, Malagasy norms of conversation regularly require speakers to provide less information than is required – even when a speaker has access to the necessary information. And so this is very significant in second or foreign language teaching.

I.E.2.b. The politeness principle

Several authors have made reference to the principle of politeness in a language (Grice 1975, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987 among others), and have provided us with different views of how politeness works stressing its complexity.

A working definition of politeness in language study is provided by Richards et al. (1992). They state that politeness refers to:

> "*How languages express the social distance between speakers and their different role relationships; and how face-work, that is, the attempt to establish, maintain and save face during conversation, is carried out in a speech community"* (p.281)

(1) Leech's maxims

The politeness principle is a series of maxims, which Geoff Leech has proposed as a way of explaining how politeness operates in conversational exchanges. Leech defines politeness as forms of behaviour that establish and maintain comity. That is the ability of participants in a social interaction to engage in interaction in an atmosphere of relative harmony. In stating his maxims Leech uses his own terms for two kinds of illocutionary acts. He calls representatives "assertives", and directives "impositives". These maxims are:

1 Tact maxim (in directives [impositives] and commissives): minimise cost to other; [maximise benefit to other]

2 Generosity maxim (in directives and commissives): minimise benefit to self; [maximise cost to self]

3 Approbation maxim (in expressives and representatives [assertives]): minimise dispraise of other; [maximise praise of other]

4 Modesty maxim (in expressives and representatives): minimise praise of self; [maximise dispraise of self]

5 Agreement maxim (in representatives): minimise disagreement between self and other; [maximise agreement between self and other]

6 Sympathy maxim (in representatives): minimise antipathy between self and other; [maximise sympathy between self and other]

(2) Politeness strategies

Politeness strategies set up a model that makes communication possible between potentially aggressive parties dealing with how people relate to one another in different societies. Politeness strategies may have different orientations in different cultures. Brown and Levinson (1987) and Hickey (1991) distinguish between "positive politeness strategies", those which show closeness and intimacy between speaker and hearer, and "negative politeness strategies", those which stress non-imposition upon the hearer and express deference.

Many types of contextual variables have to be taken into account (the speakers´ status, power, role, the nature of the circumstances etc.). It is these contextual

variables that will determine what strategies are used as well as the most relevant interpretation in each case.

I.E.3. Deixis

There are some who think of Deixis as an important field of language study in its own right and very important for learners of second languages. But it has some relevance to analysis of conversation and pragmatics.

Deixis is that constituent of an utterance which relates linguistic expression with contextual features, so that the value of the utterance as well as its appropriateness can be identified and recognized. Deixis mainly locates an utterance within the local, spatio-temporal coordinates, which is the starting point of an utterance understanding. Deixis, however, is not restricted to such. It is also related to social and cultural features.

According to Levinson (1983):

> *"Deixis concerns the ways in which languages encode features of the context of utterance, and thus also concerns ways in which the interpretation of utterances depends on the analysis of that context of utterance."* (p.)

Deixis is often and best described as "verbal pointing", that is to say pointing by means of language in verbal communication. The linguistic forms of this pointing are called "deictic expressions", "deictic markers" or "deictic words, and they include such lexemes as personal, possessive or demonstrative pronouns, possessive adverbs, articles and other pro-forms (so, do…), and they fall into three categories: personal, spatial and temporal.

Contextual use of deictic expressions is known as secondary deixis, textual deixis or endophoric deixis. Such expressions can refer either backwards (Anaphoric) or forwards (Cataphoric) to other elements in a text.

I.F. Criticism:

According to Leech (1983), there is a consensus view that pragmatics as a separate field of study is more than necessary because it handles those meanings that semantics overlooks. This view has been reflected both in practice at large and in Meaning in Interaction.

The impact of pragmatics has been colossal and multifaceted. The study of speech acts, for instance, provided illuminating explanation into sociolinguistic conduct. The findings of the cooperative principle and politeness principle also provided insights into person-to-person interactions. The choice of different linguistic means for a communicative act and the various interpretations for the same speech act elucidate human mentality in the relevance principle which contributes to the study of communication in particular and cognition in general. Implications of pragmatic studies are also evident in language teaching practices. Deixis, for instance, is important in the teaching of reading. Speech acts are often helpful for improving translation and writing. Pragmatic principles are also finding their way into the study of literary works as well as language teaching classrooms.

However, complaints were made against the vague and fuzzy principles of pragmatics which are not adequate in telling people what to choose in face of a range

of possible meanings for one single utterance in context. Because, according to Kasper (1997) , the ability to comprehend and produce a communicative act appropriately is possible only if someone has got knowledge about the social distance, social status between the speakers involved, cultural conventions such as politeness, and the linguistic data explicit and implicit. This knowledge is referred to as pragmatic competence.

II. Pragmatic competence:

As already discussed in chapter one, communicating effectively and efficiently in any given language requires more than just linguistic knowledge. The ability to use this linguistic knowledge appropriately in a given socio-cultural context is also essential. Hence, Pragmatic competence is an indispensable aspect of communicative competence to understand and be understood in interaction.

II.1. Definition of pragmatic competence

Broadly speaking, pragmatic competence is knowing about, and being able to use pragmatic principles and strategies. It is the part of communicative competence that involves being able to use language in interpersonal relationships, taking into account such complexities as social distance and indirectness, and therefore has to be located in a model of communicative ability (Savignon, 1991).

Leech and Thomas (1983) proposed to define pragmatic competence in terms of what it should include; they suggest that it is both a ‘pragma-linguistic’ and ‘socio-pragmatic’ component:

II.1.A. Pragma-linguistics refers to the resources for conveying communicative acts and relational or interpersonal meanings. I.e. language resources which are used in communicative actions apart from the linguistic ones. Such resources include pragmatic strategies like directness and indirectness, routines, and a large range of linguistic forms which can intensify or soften communicative acts.

II.1.B. Socio-pragmatics was described by Leech (1983), as *'the sociological interface of pragmatics*' (p.10), referring to the social perceptions underlying participants' interpretation and performance of communicative action. I.e. the social side of the communicative action. Because Speech communities differ in their assessment of speaker's and hearer's social distance and social power, their rights and obligations, and the degree of imposition involved in particular communicative acts.

And so, At the level of knowledge, pragmatic competence includes:

1. knowledge of socio-pragmatics, i.e., knowledge of the social conditions governing language use, like perceptions of relative power, social distance, and degree of imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1987), as well as knowledge of mutual rights and obligations, taboos, and conventional procedures (Thomas, 1983), and generally, knowledge of "what you do, when and to whom" (Fraser, Rintell & Walters, 1981).

2. Knowledge of pragma-linguistics, i.e., knowledge of conventions of means (strategies for realizing speech intentions) and conventions of form (linguistic

items used to express these intentions) (Clark, 1979; Thomas, 1983).

3 Mapping pragma-linguistic conventions on socio-pragmatic norms.

II. 2. The pragmatic component in models of communicative competence

Based on the model proposed by Bachman (1990) that illustrates the different components of what he called language competence, pragmatic competence includes the following components:

I. **Illocutionary Competence**:

A. Ideational functions

1. Ideation is the process of forming (making) ideas
2. Language can be used to help make and express ideas

B. Manipulative functions

1. Language can be used to manipulate others

C. Heuristic functions

1. Language can be used to solve problems

D. Imaginative functions

1. Language can be used to imagine (out loud) and express one's imaginations

II. **Sociolinguistic Competence:**

A. Sensitivity to Dialect or Variety. Like the Contrast British English with American English

B. Sensitivity to Register

C. Sensitivity to Naturalness. Sometimes NNS (Non-Native Speakers) use 'proper' grammar, but it doesn't sound natural, i.e., it doesn't sound natural like a NS (Native Speaker) would use language.

D. Cultural References and Figures of Speech

II.3. **Pragmatic competence and grammatical competence**

All the modals of communicative competence share the point that the two essential constituents of the concept are the grammatical and pragmatic competence. But one might question : “Is pragmatic competence built on a platform of grammatical competence?”

Unfortunately, the questions still remain unanswered. As Bardovi-Harlig (1999) points out, studies have only looked at whether a failure to perform a particular pragmatic feature can be attributed to a lack of grammatical competence in a general measure,

One of the most consistent findings in pragmatic studies is that high levels of grammatical competence do not ensure equally high levels of pragmatic competence, and this is what was shown in the works of Bardovi- Harlig (1999). Nevertheless, as other studies illustrate, a minimal level of grammatical competence seems to be necessary. The majority of studies that have looked at the relationship between grammatical and pragmatic competence show higher proficiency learners to be generally better at drawing inferences (Carrell, 1984). In short, the literature presents two generally accepted claims about the relationship between grammatical competence and pragmatic competence: (1) grammar is not a sufficient condition for pragmatic competence; and (2) grammar is a necessary condition for pragmatic competence.The first claim is based on the observation that a learner already knows

about linguistic structures but has not yet learnt that he/she can use them as some pragmatic strategies. Whereas the second is based on the observation that a learner knows the appropriate pragmatic strategy for a given context, but does not know how to realize it due to limited linguistic knowledge

Such an unbalanced comparison clearly is limited in its ability to explain to what extent and in what ways grammatical knowledge facilitates or impedes pragmatic development. To answer these questions, further research with an improved methodology would be necessary.

Conclusion

Bardovi-Harlig, et al. (1991) show that native speakers are only partially aware of their pragmatic competence because most of pragmatic knowledge is tacit or implicit knowledge: it underlies their communicative action, but they cannot describe it. That is why miscommunication or pragmatic failure is often vaguely diagnosed as 'impolite' behaviour on the part of the non-native speaker, whereas the specific source of the irritation remains unclear.

Moreover, as far as the non-native speaker is concerned, the range of what can be said at a given point of a conversation is narrow and sometimes dramatically restricted, compared to the number of conceivable utterances which are merely related to the subject of the conversation and context.

Because this context is, as already discussed, culture bound, and no two speakers belonging to two different social communities share the same pragmatic competence,

second and foreign language learners find some difficulties when interacting with native speakers.

This issue was long ignored and it was even thought that foreign languages teaching can never encompass the pragmatic dimension, but with advance in research in the field, it has been proved that second and foreign language learners can benefit the development of pragmatic competence, which will be clarified in the following chapter.

Part One

Chapter Three

Introduction

As discussed in the previous chapter, pragmatic competence is neither subordinated to organizational (or linguistic) competence nor ornamental. It is the kind of knowledge that must be reasonably well developed in order to communicate successfully in a language. And so its development should be given the same importance as organizational competence.

The problem is, however, that second or foreign language pragmatic competence does not develop the same way as grammatical competence, nor does it develop the same way as first language pragmatic competence, because it initially depends on context and context is culture bound. Robinson-Stuart & Nocon (1996) explain this by claiming that second language pragmatic acquisition is "second culture acquisition", and so its development is relatively complex and does need a quiet specific approach in teaching.

As a result to the complex nature of pragmatic competence, EFL learners are not always aware of the complexities of the use of English in various situations, because language classroom environment and most English learning resource materials lack sufficient exposure to authentic input. Consequently, English language teachers are faced with the challenge of creating that natural-like environment providing the basic range of situations necessary for fostering students' pragmatic competence.

This chapter is concerned with pragmatic competence and language teaching; First it attempts at clarifying the nature of acquisitional pragmatics by trying to answer questions like: can pragmatic competence be developed, to what extent and why

should it be developed, what makes a learner pragmatically competent …etc. The second item is concerned with the type of instructional setting that helps such a task, accounting at the same time for some theories explaining its acquisition. Then a third section deals with the learner himself and the mechanism of acquiring pragmatic competence, and as a conclusion to this chapter, I will briefly re-examine the goals that instruction in pragmatics is supposed to aim at.

I.Understanding the nature of acquisitional pragmatics

Pragmatics is firmly established as a critical research area in first language (L1) development. Despite this, it has long been a neglected area in second/foreign language research. It has even been thought that it is the aspect of communicative competence that is beyond the reach of foreign language learners. It is only recently that some researchers recognized it as a legitimate focus of inquiry in mainstream SLA research. Still, much remains to be learned about the acquisitional processes of second/foreign language pragmatics, especially when it comes to explaining how it is acquired.

I.1. Implicit or explicit instruction?

The debate of the nature of acquisitional pragmatics is still open and not settled yet, while some researchers emphasise the necessity of explicit instruction to achieve the pragmatic objective, others claim that it is only through implicitly integrating the pragmatic aspects of the target language that FL learners benefit its development.

Gabriel kasper (1997) is one of those who are against an explicit teaching of

pragmatics, she clearly states that:

> *"Competence whether linguistic or pragmatic, is not teachable. Competence is a type of knowledge that learners possess, develop, acquire, use or lose. And when talking about the possibility of developing pragmatic competence in a second or foreign language, it is more appropriate to address the issue of how to arrange learning opportunities in such a way that makes learners benefit the development of pragmatic competence".*

This is supported by the argument that specific L2 culture-bound language is the deciding factor that underlies those different aspects of pragmatic ability, and culture is a subconscious system, therefore it is difficult, not to say impossible, to make it explicit. Austin (1998) agrees with this point when he states that:

> "*This interdisciplinary nature of pragmatic competence calls for a need to acquire pragmatic knowledge in a holistic context, encompassing all the discrete components of pragmatic ability, including discourse management ability and, most importantly, culture"*

In addition to this, many researchers (Coulmas, 1981; Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992, among others) assume that in some cases, adult NNS (non-native speakers) do get a considerable amount of L2 pragmatic knowledge without actually being aware of: this is thanks to the universal pragmatic knowledge, i.e. The organizational principles conversations follow and which are present in all languages, like turn taking, softening or intensifying requests…etc. This is also the case when distributions of participants' relative social positions are equivalent in the learners' original and target community, or in case there is a corresponding form-function mapping between L1

and the target language, so that the forms can be used in corresponding L2 contexts with corresponding effects as it is the case in some Germanic social categorizations (Mir, 1995).

Unfortunately, learners do not always benefit from positive transfer: That is why some researchers explain that if the learner is not consciously targeting the pragmatic aspects, s/he cannot develop a competence in them. And so an explicit instruction is very indispensable in order to develop pragmatic competence.

This second view is mainly supported by Blum-Kulka (1990) who, in part doesn't totally disagree with the holistic teaching of pragmatics, but views the pragmatic goal as better achieved through conscious learning. He proposes a model of "General Pragmatic Knowledge (GP)" (p.255) where the learner is presented with an organized schema containing all the L2 linguistic forms used for a speech act, for instance. This schema, in turn, is governed by a L2 "cultural filter" (p.256) which decides the situational appropriateness of the L2 linguistic forms. Wierzbicka (1994) as well introduced his notion of "cultural script", *"a specific type of schema which captures characteristic L2 cultural beliefs and values in order for learners to understand "a society's ways of speaking*" (p. 2).

And so this second view advocates a need for a precise and conceivable description of L2 cultural rules of behaviour In order to acquire L2 pragmatic skills.

I.B. pragmatic transfer

according to Kasper (1992), Interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatics studies

have provided ample evidence that L2 learners' L1 pragmatic knowledge significantly influences their comprehension and production of pragmatic performance in the L2, something which results in a negative transfer or simply a literal translation of linguistic items available in their first to the target language, like the transfer of L1 pragmatic strategies, apology semantic formulas, conventional forms for requesting and expressing gratitude, modal verbs in requests, and frequency, order, and content of semantic formulas in refusals…etc (Beebe et al., 1990).

Learners, as observed by Fukushima (1990) and Tanaka (1988), frequently misuse some strategies in the target language because of some context variables as social distance and social power which are different from their first language. House (1993) termed this negative transfer as "L1 schematic transfer"; He explains that it stems primarily from a lack of the culture-specific pragmatic knowledge needed for a given situation rather than a deficiency of linguistic competence.

However, findings in the studies of the relationship between proficiency and transfer have been incompatible to date, and thus no solid pattern has yet been established.

Maeshiba, Yoshinaga, Kasper, and Ross (1996) claim that advanced learners were better than intermediate learners at identifying contexts where L1 apology strategies could or could not be used. And so apparently, one of the reasons of negative transfer is a lack of linguistic resources.

Yet, others report contradicting findings. Ellis (1994) and Koike (1996) claim that

pragmatic transfer happens when learners are advanced enough to be able to analyze the components of complex speech acts, but make incorrect hypotheses about how L1 and L2 lexical and syntactic items correlate. T. Takahashi and Beebe (1987) also claim that the more proficient learners are, the more they have "*the rope to hang themselves with"* (p. 153), because they have the words to say what they want to say.

We need also to recognize that other factors may outweigh linguistic proficiency, like learners' familiarity with the situational context. Because many agree that negative transfer could be attributed (in case there is no cultural resistance) to the dis-identification strategies and the lack of students' "awareness" of what is and is not appropriate in given contexts. Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1997) report that without a pragmatic focus, "*foreign language teaching can raise students' Meta-linguistic awareness, but it does not contribute much to develop their Meta-pragmatic consciousness in L2*".

To help students develop their meta-pragmatic consciousness, Müller (1981) proposes a combination of assimilation and spot-the-difference strategy which he termed cultural isomorphism. He explains that without a kind of prior cultural knowledge, second and foreign language learners cannot advance pragmatically. He suggests that L2 practices are subjected to the same social evaluations as the apparently equivalent L1 practices.

Through the assimilative and contrastive strategy of cultural isomorphism, stereotypical evaluations of L2 practices emerge. And with practice, those notions

would be fossilized in the learner's linguistic system to be ultimately used in a spontaneous manner.

I.C. the pragmatic Fossilization

Although little is known about pragmatic fossilization, few studies report some empirical evidence for its existence.

Language researchers are quiet optimistic about the possibility for improvement if learners were situated in an ESL setting, being exposed to adequate and sufficient input. Indeed, the learning context has been found to be particularly crucial for pragmatic development in that, unlike other areas of language use, pragmatic aspects can be evaluated only in meaningful and, where possible, authentic interactions. Yet, it is also reported that an ESL setting itself does not provide an adequate learning context for destabilizing fossilized interlanguage performance. More importantly, because the formula in question was highly frequent and salient in the available NS input, more experience and input in the same community would not have helped these learners to de-fossilize. In fact, studies of cross-cultural interaction between immigrants and NSs in the U.K. have reported learners' failure to attain an adequate level of socio-cultural competence in spite of prolonged and frequent exposure to the L2 (Thornborrow, 1991). Scarcella (1983) concluded that this inappropriate use of conversational features resulted from these learners' "wholesale transfer" (p. 319) at an earlier stage of development (rather than the creative adaptation of these features into English) and had remained fossilized ever since.

In sum, based on these findings presented thus far, it may be reasonable to suspect

the existence of fossilization at a pragmatic level. To make any decisive claims, however, it would be necessary to mention that not all the pragmatic items can be fossilized, not even taught, for research has only been able to demonstrate the teachability of some of its aspects.

II. What do learners need to know to be pragmatically competent?

As we have mentioned in the previous chapter, all aspects of pragmatic competence considerably overlap with each other. In other words, they do not operate independently but interact with each other in systematic ways governing learners' linguistic behaviour. ``````

A number of assessment approaches have been developed with the aim of providing an organisational framework or descriptive taxonomy. Which meets "the need to determine what the pragmatic aspects of language are and how these aspects should be organised for clinical and research purposes" (Prutting & Kirchner, 1987 p. 106).

This is at the theoretical level, but as argued by Kasper(date), having the development of "pragmatic competence" as a teaching goal is so broad and so varied, that's why one needs to specify what exactly needs to be placed first before other skills. In addition to that, when we talk about initiating students to second/foreign language pragmatics, we are not aspiring to make them aware of all its components, at least at the current stage of research. Because since pragmatics is a new field in language study, maybe not all aspects of pragmatic competence have already been subject to

research in second or foreign language learning, but aspects that proved indeed teachable can be listed under four major headings:

II.1. The Ability to Perform Speech Acts

Numerous studies have recognized that the ability of learners to use appropriate Speech Acts in a given speech event and to select appropriate linguistic forms to realize this Speech Act is a major component of second/foreign language pragmatic competence.

What S/FL learners must know for successful Speech Act performance was presented by Kasper (1984), in a top-down processing manner:

> *"Learners first have to recognize the extra-linguistic, cultural constraints that operate in a NSs' choice of a particular Speech Act appropriate to the context, and then they have to know how to realize this speech act at the linguistic level in accordance with the L2 socio-cultural norms".* (p. 3)

Cohen (1996) defines this socio-cultural knowledge as :

> "*a speaker's ability to determine whether it is acceptable to perform the Speech Act at all in the given situation and, if so, to select one or more semantic formulas that would be appropriate in the realization of the given speech act*" (p. 254).

As an example to this, Wolfson (1981) noted a tendency among middle-class Americans to *"make their compliments original and less formulaic in order to convey sincerity, while Arabic speakers prefer proverbs and ritualized phrases"*. (p.8)

II.2. The Ability to Convey and Interpret Non-literal Meanings

As large as the term "non-literal meanings" may seem, there is no one single

example to cite about this, but still, it is quiet worth to state some of the research findings.

According to Carrell (1984): *"one aspect of pragmatic competence in an L2 is the ability to draw correct inferences"* (p.1).

Fraser (1983) includes the ability to interpret figurative language as part of pragmatics because utterances which are deliberate violations of the conversational maxims require the ability to recognize and interpret conversational implicature. to cite two examples, we have "the future is now" as a violation of the maxim Quality, and "I wasn't born yesterday" as a violation of Quantity.

Other examples of the non literal meaning are the idiomatic expressions.

III.3. The Ability to Perform Politeness Functions

Brown and Levinson (1992) posit universal principles for linguistic politeness based on a social foundation. They explain that in developing pragmatic competence, learners have to become familiar with the cultural ethos associated with politeness as shared by members of the FL community.

As an example to this, some cultures prefer indirectness as a politeness strategy, but as a number of cross-cultural pragmatic studies on politeness point out, the application of this principle differs systematically across cultures and languages

Leech (1983) and Thomas (1995) note, indirectness increases the degree of optionality and negotiability on the part of hearer and thereby reduces the imposition on the hearer.

This and other studies demonstrate that the ability to choose the appropriate

linguistic directness and politeness functions with reference to the target language norm is crucial for pragmatic competence.

III.4. The Ability to Perform Discourse Functions

Most of the time, achievement of communicative intent in naturally occurring conversation requires a number of discourse strategies between the interlocutors. Accordingly, Blum-Kulka (1997) points out that "*a full pragmatic account would need to consider the various linguistic and paralinguistic signals by which both participants encode and interpret each other's utterances*" (p. 49). And so learners need to be aware of discourse differences between their first and target languages in order to be pragmatically competent.

At the observable behavioural level, in order to communicate their intentions successfully in discourse, S/FL learners should acquire two types of discourse management ability:

III.4.A. The ability to interpret and fill the discourse slots as L2 conversational norms dictate. Of course, what are referred to as "fillers of discourse slots" are very numerous and differ according to the culture. As explained by Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1992): "*closings (as an example of a strategy of filling discourse slot) are culture specific, both in their obligatoriness and structure*" (p. 93), i.e. some cultures prefer using those fillers (American culture) whereas others consider them as lack of proficiency (Arabic).

To give some examples of "discourse fillers", Edmondson, House, Kasper and Stemmer (1984) state some of these routines and summarised them under:

- territory invasion signals (e.g. *Excuse me*),
- topic introducers (e.g., *There's something I'd like to ask you*),
- extractors (e.g., *I really must go now*),
- Sum-ups (e.g., *Let's leave it at that, then*).

And although this seems simple but Literature has demonstrated they can constitute a major source of pragmatic failure.

III.4.B. The ability to recognize and produce discourse markers correctly in terms of their pragmatic functions.

Ebsworth, Bodman and Carpenter (1996) attribute the failure to mastering this ability to the lack of the repertoire of creative language use; in responding to greetings, learners tend to adhere to ritualized routines and remain formal. According to these researchers, it is generally contended that greetings are purely phatic and only convey attitudes (e.g., sincere vs. insincere) rather than facts – thus only requiring a formulaic answer or sometimes no answer at all – which is not the case for natural interactions. This is also felt in the variation of types of compliment-responses, length of pauses…etc

In sum, conversational routines are often used on a habitual rather than a conscious-processing level (Wildner-Bassett, 1994). It should be noted, however, that for smooth day-to-day, face to-face interactions these routines also carry cultural meanings, expressing cultural appropriateness and tacit agreements. Thus, the appropriate use of routines clearly plays an important role in S/FL pragmatic ability.

So, to sum it up, because there is a lot of pragmatic information that adult learners possess without always knowing how to use it , there seems to be a role for pedagogical intervention to make learners aware of what they already know and encourage them to use their transferable L1 pragmatic knowledge in the target language contexts.

III. pragmatics and language teaching

Because of the contextual nature of pragmatics acquisition, the objective of making learners achieve a certain proficiency of pragmatic competence in a second/foreign language requires a progression away from a view of language as a formal and context-independent system towards a far broader functional contextual framework.

The view of language teaching which doesn't give priority to the effective use of language in context has some limitations when it comes to teaching pragmatics. These limitations are illustrated by the learner who;*"has a relatively good command of grammatical and lexical patterns of language but who is unable to use these structures appropriately in speech situations and who does not interact naturally with others*" (Crystal, 1985, p10).

Context-independent language teaching encompasses many forms of teaching, some of them are beneficent at some levels and some are not.

III.1. pragmatics and Teacher fronted language teaching

It is a well-documented fact that in teacher- fronted teaching, the person doing most

of the talking is the teacher. This is consistent with a knowledge-transmission model of teaching, according to which the teacher imparts new information to students, helps them process such information and controls whether the new information has become part of students' knowledge.

When this is set against the pragmatic needs, it could be admitted that teacher fronted form is useful to a certain extent, because through the sheer quantity of teacher talk, students are provided with the input they need for pragmatic development. However, studies show that compared to conversation outside instructional settings, teacher-fronted classroom discourse displays:

- a more narrow range of speech acts (Long, Adams, McLean, & Castaños, 1976)
- a lack of politeness marking (Lörscher & Schulze, 1988)
- shorter and less complex openings and closings (Lörscher, 1986; Kasper, 1989)
- Monopolization of discourse organization and management by the teacher (Lörscher, 1986; Ellis, 1990).
- A limited range of discourse markers (Kasper, 1989).

This is not to claim that classroom discourse is 'artificial'. Classroom discourse is just as authentic as any other kind of discourse. But the difference is that it is limited in the sense that language does not function as means for communication but rather as an object for analysis. Moreover, it is an institutional activity in which participants'

roles are inequitably distributed (Nunan, 1989), and the social relationships in this unequal power encounter are reflected and re-affirmed at the level of discourse, and this is to the detriment of students' speaking opportunities.

Teacher's and students' rights and obligations, and the activities associated with them, are epitomized in the basic interactional pattern of traditional teacher-fronted teaching; described by Chaudron (1988) as "*the pedagogical exchange of elicitation (by the teacher) - response (by a student) - feedback (by the teacher)"* (p.37).

And so, this classical format of language classroom does not offer students the pragmatic opportunities they need - not in terms of teacher's input, nor in terms of students' productive language use.

III.2. pragmatics and students centred teaching

In a comparison of teacher-fronted teaching and small group work, Long et al. (1976) demonstrated that student pragmatic participation increases obviously in student-centred activities. Importantly, they are given opportunities to practice conversational management, perform a larger range of communicative acts, and interact with other participants in completing a task. Moreover, small group works help learners' gradual development towards the spontaneous and productive use of alignment forms. And this is what has been presented in the Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development Theory.

III.2.A. Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development

In the Vygotskian view (1978), learning takes place in the area of the Zone of

Proximal Development (ZPD), that is, "*the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with peers"* (p. 86).

When the construct of the ZPD is applied to L2 learning, learning is viewed as occurring as the result of mediation in which a NS (or more skilled peer) acts as the "go-between" between the learner and the task at hand (Schinke-Llano, 1993, p. 124). In the early stages, the learner entirely depends on more skilled peers, who instruct the learner on what to do, what not to do, and how to do it. This other-regulation continues until the learner gains control over strategic mental processes, i.e., until self-regulation, through noticing saliencies and patterns of the immediate context (Vygotsky, 1981).

In simple words, learning pragmatics takes place when the transition from other-regulation to self-regulation is accomplished through collaborative, dialogic activity.

III.3. pragmatics and contextualized language teaching

In response to the need to pay more attention to language acquisition as a social phenomenon, there emerged a new approach to language teaching seeking a more holistic approach to L2 pragmatic development, which takes both learner and socio-cultural context into consideration, and this, is what came to be termed contextualised language teaching.

Part of what defines contextualized language teaching is "*to use language*

meaningfully, appropriately, and effectively" (Ochs, 1996, p.408), and, in this respect, it has been actively embraced as an insightful perspective into pragmatic development in recent years.

In essence, contextualized language teaching proposes that S/F language learners acquire socio-cultural knowledge by participating in language-mediated daily interactions which transmit important socio-cultural values to them (H. Cook, 1999). Language socialization takes place either explicitly, when the appropriate behaviour governing an immediate social interaction is overtly taught by providing meta-pragmatic information on the social norms shared by members of that society with regard to the speech act of event, or implicitly, by participating in daily routines and acquiring their regularities with no recourse to the overt meta-pragmatic instruction (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986).

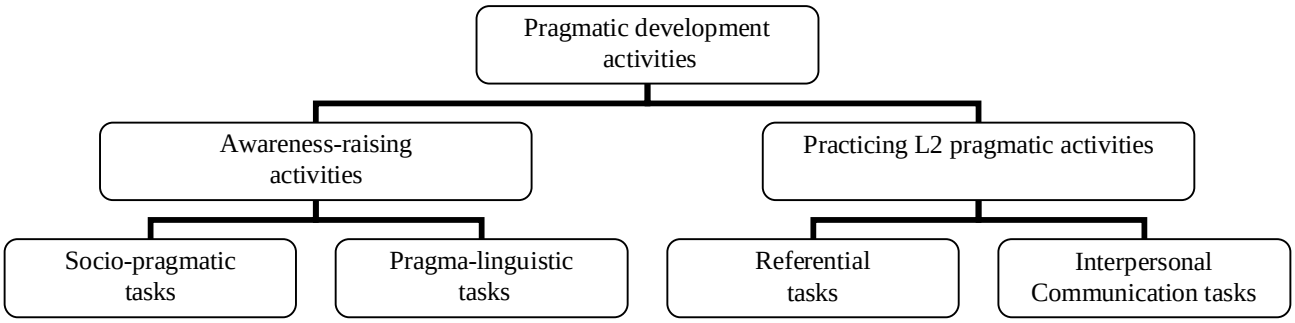
Contextualized language teaching offers a particularly useful approach when researching the acquisition of L2 pragmatics because it incorporates the neglected dimension of the speech event as it links learners' discourse with a focus on spoken modes of language, e.g., genres, speech acts, turn-takings, and discourse topics, to a more general ethnographic account of the cultural beliefs and practices of the community into which a learner is being socialized.

IV. The pragmatic objective and specific language instruction

As we have already discussed, when there is no mapping between the native and the target language, Instruction in pragmatics is necessary. Bouton (1988) demonstrated

that without some form of instruction, many aspects of pragmatic competence do not develop sufficiently. The most compelling evidence comes from learners whose L2 proficiency is advanced and whose unsuccessful pragmatic competence is not likely to be the result of cultural resistance or dis-identification strategies.

From some reviewed studies in SL research, a number of activities proved useful for pragmatic development. Such activities can be classified into two main types: activities aiming at raising students' pragmatic awareness, and activities offering opportunities for communicative practice.



Pragmatic development activities

IV.1. Awareness-raising activities

Through awareness-raising activities, students acquire both socio-pragmatic and pragma-linguistic information.

These activities are based primarily on observation of particular pragmatic features in various sources of oral or written data, ranging from native speaker 'classroom guests' (Bardovi-Harlig, et al., 1991) to videos of authentic interaction, feature films

(Rose, 1997), and other written and audiovisual sources.

In such kind of activities, students can also be given a variety of observation assignments outside the classroom. According on what aspects these tasks focus, observation tasks can be classified into socio-pragmatic or pragma-linguistic tasks.

I**V.1.A. socio-pragmatic tasks** aim at making learners discover under what conditions native speakers express communicative acts , when, for what kinds of goods or services, and to whom. Depending on the students population and available time, such observations may be open (left to the students to detect what the important context factors may be) or structured (students are provided with an observation sheet which specifies the categories to look out for - for instance, speaker's and hearer's status and familiarity, the cost of the good or service to the giver, and the degree to which the giver is obliged to provide the good or service).

IV.1.B. Pragma-linguistic tasks focus on the strategies and linguistic means by which speech acts are accomplished - what formulae are used, and what additional means of expressing appreciation are employed, such as expressing pleasure about the giver's thoughtfulness or the received gift, asking questions about it, and so forth.

Finally, by examining in which contexts the various ways are used, socio-pragmatic and pragma-linguistic aspects are combined**.** By focusing students' attention on relevant features of the input, such observation tasks help students make connections between linguistic forms, pragmatic functions, their occurrence in different social contexts, and their cultural meanings. Students are thus guided to notice the

information they need in order to develop their pragmatic competence in the target language .The observations made outside the classroom will be reported back to class, compared with those of other students, and perhaps commented and explained by the teacher. These discussions can take on any kind of small group of whole class format.

IV.2. Practicing L2 pragmatic activities

Practicing L2 pragmatic abilities requires student-centred interaction. In his book on tasks for language learning, Nunan (1989) explains the rationale underlying a task-based approach from the perspectives of second language acquisition and pedagogy. Most small group interaction requires that students take alternating discourse roles as speaker and hearer, yet different types of task may engage students in different speech events and communicative actions. It is therefore important to identify very specifically which pragmatic abilities are called upon by different tasks. A useful distinction can be made between:

IV.2.A. Referential tasks: Yule (in press) explains that students have to refer to concepts for which they lack necessary L2 words. Such tasks expand students' vocabulary and develop their strategic competence.

IV.2.B. interpersonal communication tasks: are more concerned with participants' social relationships and include such communicative acts as opening and closing conversations, expressing emotive responses as in thanking and apologizing, or influencing the other person's course of action as in requesting, suggesting, inviting, and offering.

V. Reconsidering pragmatic ability as a teaching goal

It is clear that the purpose of the proposed learning activities is to help students become pragmatically competent, and consequently more effective communicators in L2. But there often appears to be an implicit understanding that effective and successful NNSs should have the same or very similar pragmatic ability as NS. On this view, pragmatic competence as a learning objective should be based on a NS model.

However, as Siegal (1996) points out:

> *"Second language learners do not merely model native speakers with a desire to emulate, but rather actively create both a new interlanguage and an accompanying identity in the learning process*" (p.362).

Second language learners' desire for convergence with NS pragmatics or divergence from NS practices is shaped by learners' views of themselves, their social position in the target community and in different contexts within the wider L2 environment, and by their experience with NS in various encounters.

Moreover, Giles, Coupland and Coupland (1991) documented that in many ethnolinguistic contact situations; successful communication is a matter of optimal rather than total convergence. Optimal convergence is a dynamic, negotiable construct that defies hard-and-fast definition. It refers to pragmatic and sociolinguistic choices which are consistent with participants' subjectivities and social claims, and recognizes that such claims may be in conflict between participants.

They showed that members of the target community may perceive NNS's total convergence to L2 pragmatics as intrusive and inconsistent with the NNS's role as outsider to the L2 community, whereas they may appreciate some measure of divergence as a disclaimer to membership.

Briefly the objective of teaching pragmatics and culture bound linguistic strategies is not a complete convergence towards a stereotypical target language norm, but rather an accommodation between the two cultures, or optimal convergence. And this is best explained by the speech accommodation theory.

V.1. Speech Accommodation Theory

Speech Accommodation Theory (SAT) seeks to explain the social-psychological mechanisms underlying certain shifts in a learner's speech style in social interaction (e.g., convergence vs. divergence) and some of the social consequences that result from this.

In this respect, Giles and Byrne's (1982) Inter-group Theory (IT) of SAT offers a useful framework for understanding how some factors facilitate or impede NS proficiency in an L2.

According to IT, a learner who perceives using the target language as a basis to his/her ethnic identity (or as it is called "ethnic betrayal") is not likely to achieve NS proficiency of the out-group language and is likely to become proficient only in classroom aspects of the L2 such as vocabulary and grammar .

On the other hand, a learner who regards L2 learning as additive and who has integrative motivation and positive attitudes towards the out-group culture is more

likely to achieve NS proficiency not only in vocabulary and grammar but also in sociolinguistic mastery of the L2.

Conclusion

As Enochs and Yoshitaka-Strain (1999) point out, the acquisition of competence in a foreign language is generally "*accepted to involve more than the ability to produce grammatically correct language, it also involves an understanding of whether or not utterances are situationally appropriate, otherwise known as pragmatic competence"*(p.29). Lack of this understanding may result in pragmatic failure, defined by Thomas (1983) as "the inability to understand what is meant by what is said."(p.91). This may result from culture-bound systems of beliefs and attitudes to the target language and culture, and can only be redressed through raising levels of metapragmatic awareness. Without this awareness, the learner may experience pragmatic failure, or failed communication as a result of unintended divergence from communication norms in the TLC (Target Language Community).

This is why teaching pragmatic competence is not an easy task. Moreover, while social context is an essential factor in pragmatic competence, this latter does not only involve pragmatic considerations. One may also choose to take a focus of this kind in making a pragmatic analysis and conscious learning. However, it may be useful to remind ourselves that NS are no ideal communicators. As Coupland, Wiemann, and Giles, (1991) comment, "*language use and communication are (...) pervasively and even intrinsically flawed, partial, and problematic*"(p.3). And yet NS communication

succeeds more than it fails, not because it is perfect but because it is good enough for the purpose at hand.

And although setting the pragmatic objective as a teaching goal is very necessary, it would be unreasonable and unrealistic to place higher demands on L2 learners' communicative abilities than on those of NS. Therefore, there is a continued need for studies examining how NS and NNS communicate effectively in different contexts.

Part Two

Field Work

Introduction

The previous chapters considered ways in which pragmatic competence makes sense in the process of communicative competence development. We have also tried to demonstrate that as a result to the sheer number of experiments conducted on second/foreign language pragmatic development, the old premise that considered pragmatic and socio-linguistic competence as only a property of native speakers was proved to be wrong. Hence it is possible to make non-native language learners benefit the development of pragmatic competence.

However, an understanding of what makes effective foreign language pragmatic awareness and use possible differs qualitatively from one context to another. And so the possibility of integrating pragmatic teaching in Algeria and more specifically at the University of Biskra is more complex than just generalizing theories and other findings experimented in other learning contexts.

In this part, we will try to prove the significance of instructed pragmatic activities to help advanced learners achieve better results in their (oral) communicative proficiency level. But before doing so, we found it logical to investigate at first hand how teachers perceive their students' level of communicative competence, how important do they judge such a notion when teaching oral expression, what role they attribute to pragmatic competence and how can pragmatic failure cause an underachievement in oral proficiency.

This research is an Action Research designed in a three-step spiral process:

1. Reconnaissance achieved through a descriptive study of teachers' perception of their students' competence in communication in order to diagnose the absence of pragmatic focused teaching.

2. Treatment, which means after having hypothesised that underachievement in oral proficiency stems mainly from the absence of a pragmatic dimension in teaching oral expression, we have tried to introduce some pragmatic development activities in our oral expression class.

3. Fact-finding about the results of the action in order to prove whether it is the problem or no.

And so, this part is divided into three items. The first one is a mere introductory item where some basic clarifications about the nature of the field work and the research methods used are presented. The second item tries to investigate third years' students' level in communication according to their teachers. And finally, the third item deals with a true experimental design conducted on a sample selected from third year students of the English department of the University of Biskra, in order to demonstrate that there is indeed a need to integrate some pragmatic insights to develop oral performance.

Before a general conclusion, this part is supplied with an additional item concerned with what we saw as pedagogical implications of the research findings, then general recommendations.

I. the research methodology design

I. 1. Choice of the research Methods

The nature of the issue, the objective to be attained and the kind of data required are all factors determining the most appropriate research method(s) to be used.

In our case, we can divide the subject into two interrelated major investigation headlines: while making a diagnostic evaluation of students' competence in communication calls for a descriptive design via a questionnaire administered to teachers of oral expression, proving that pragmatics is an essential constituent of oral expression teaching necessitates a more empirical action research in which an experimental group is presented with many activities targeting their pragmatic competence development.

However, we need to mention that we can not pretend to generalize the results of the present research over a wider population than the one investigated for it is a case study, and according to Nunan (1986): "*the principal difference between case studies and other research studies is that the focus of attention is the case, not the whole population of cases*" (p80).

I.2. The approach

Action researches are generally classified into qualitative or quantitative. We cannot consider our research as being qualitative in the sense that it doesn't employ an "insider's" perspective; and this is done in purpose because a qualitative research is an intensely personal and subjective style of research.

However, because the main objectives of our research is to reduce a social reality to variables in the same manner as physical reality; and to attempt to tightly control the variable in question to see how other variables are influenced, then we can qualify it as qualitative. This type of research argues that both the natural and social sciences strive for testable and confirmable theories that explain phenomena by showing how they are derived from theoretical (scientific) assumptions.

I.3. The variables

Experimental researches often want to look at the relationship between two phenomena, with one estimated to have an influence over the other. In such a case, it is necessary to distinguish between the two variables by giving them different labels.

The variable that is supposed to influence the other is called the independent variable. Whereas the one upon which the independent variable is acting is called the dependant variable.

In the present study, our dependant variable is student's competence in communication, whereas the independent variable is hypothesized as being the integration of some pragmatic notions in the oral expression curriculum.

In other words, in this research we hypothesize that if the selected students are introduced to (some) pragmatic knowledge, their level of communicative competence will qualitatively improve.

I.4. The data gathering tools.

Here also, the choice of data gathering tools depends on the overall objective of our research.

Because the present research aims first at diagnosing students' competence in communication, then second at proving that they really need a kind of instruction to develop their level of oral proficiency, we have opted for two main data gathering tools: a questionnaire and an experiment respectively. And these are going to be dealt with separately in what follows.

II. The questionnaire

According to Maykut and Morehouse (1994), Questionnaire research is very popular among educational researchers in general and ELT research in particular.

In the present research, the questionnaire is chosen as a data gathering tool because before implementing the theoretical findings, we need to assess teachers' attitudes towards their students' level of communication .And among the two ways that can achieve such an objective (the questionnaire and the interview) we judged that the questionnaire is more appropriate for "*it affords a good deal of precision and clarity, because the knowledge needed is controlled by the questions*" as discussed by McDonough and McDonough (1997) . Whereas the interview is quiet vague and it offers more qualitative than quantitative data.

II.1. characteristics of the questionnaire

II.1.A. validity

A questionnaire can be said to be 'valid' if it examines the full scope of the research

question in a balanced way, i.e. it measures what it aims to measure.

Validity of the present questionnaire was examined by interviewing some respondents after they have completed the questionnaire to find out whether the responses they have given in the questionnaire agree with their real opinions. When testing face validity, we judged it important to word the questions in the interview differently from those in the questionnaire.

II.1.B. Reliability

Reliability is defined as an assessment of the reproducibility and consistency of an instrument.

The method by which we have tested the reliability of the present questionnaire was the test–retest way: i.e. by asking some participants to complete the questionnaire on two separate occasions, assuming that their circumstances will not have changed in the interim.

II.1.C. Acceptability

Qualitative methods can be used to assess the acceptability of a questionnaire. During our pilot study, we have asked some participants to write their comments about the questionnaire on a separate sheet, we have also asked some of them how they found answering the questionnaire during the validity testing.

II.2. Steps in administering the questionnaire

The questionnaire was piloted twice during the course of the experiment. The first piloted questionnaire served to identify those items which were unclear, repetitive,

and unnecessary. When first submitted to some teachers belonging to the population targeted, they were mainly confused about the term "pragmatics" itself and, consequently, they could not understand most of the questions. And because we had not have the opportunity to gather all the participants in order to facilitate understanding the questions, the questionnaire was modified and piloted for a second time with the term “pragmatics” replaced each time by one of its closest concepts (depending on the objectives of the questions), i.e. the contextual, situational, or cultural use of language.

Before submitting the final version of the questionnaire, it was modelled on previous course feedback forms from our supervisor and teachers, and modified according to this.

Still, we managed to have an appointment with some participants, and this made it easier for them to understand all of the questions.

The final version of the questionnaire (Appendix A) comprises twenty three items, grouped into four major categories according to the aim of each set of questions. It includes two Open Ended Questions (although almost all the other types of questions asked clarifications using an open ended question); eight Closed Questions, five Likert Scale Questions, and the remaining eight are Multiple Choice Questions. Sometimes one question is asked in more than one section in order to test the validity of the answers. we have also tried to avoid overly long questions, double-barrelled and leading questions.

II.3. Questionnaire participants

II.3.A. The population

One of the aims of this research, as stated earlier, is to see to what extent advanced learners (third year students) are aware of, and consequently make use of the pragmatic dimension in their oral language. And so, we thought that teachers of oral expression are the ones who can contribute to such a survey.

II.3.B. The sample

Because the number of oral expression teachers at the university of Biskra is relatively small (10), we preferred to take the whole population and not to confine our research on a sample for it is easy to deal with such a small number.

The problem however, was to achieve an adequate and representative number, because such a kind of survey is particularly reliant on the willingness of the subjects to take part. The questionnaire was answered only by 7 oral expression teachers, which makes a percentage of loss of about 30%. among these 7 oral expression teachers, wee have to mention the participation of one teacher who is not exercising his work as teacher of oral expression at the present time but who has previously taught it and whom, we judged, would be of a great help in our investigation. The data were anonymized, so no attempt could be made to correlate individual datasets, or to relate opinions to teacher characteristics.

II.4. Data analysis

Data analysis is not a simple description of the data collected but, according to

Powney & Watts (1987), it is also "*a process by which the researcher can bring interpretation to the data*".

In this process content analysis was performed by first listing the range of responses provided by the participants, and then grouping common features and recurrent themes. These themes were then subsumed under four main categories. Using these information, Biskra university oral expression teachers' perception of their students' communicative competence level was identified.

The findings from the analyses of data will first be discussed separately as follows:

I. Personal information

1. **Item one:**

   Q: your educational level

answer	BA	PG	MA	Doctorate
Number		4	2	1
percentage		57.14%	28.57%	14.28%

The results shown in the table above demonstrate that the majority of the questionnaire participants (57.14%) are post graduate students, 28.57% have got their master degree and only one participant, representing the percentage of 14.28% is a doctor.

2. **Item two**:

Q.a. Have you ever been in an English speaking country?

answer	yes	no
number	2	5
percentage	28.57%	71.42%

Q.b. If yes, where?

The English speaking country	Number (answers yes)
The united states of America	1
England	2
other	

The objective of asking such a question is to determine the percentage of teachers who are apt to transmit the English socio-cultural knowledge.

The results show that that out of 7 teachers, only two have spent some time in an English speaking country and thus are able to provide their students with some kind of pragmatic knowledge.

3. **Item three**:

Q. How many years have you taught oral expression?

answer	Less than 5 years	5 to 10 years	More than 10 years
number	2	3	2
percentage	28.57%	42.85%	28.57%

The majority of the questionnaire respondents lack experience in teaching oral expression, for only 28.57% have taught it for more than ten years, while 42.85% have taught it from five to ten years, and the remaining 28.57% others are completely novice having taught oral expression for less than five years.

4. Item four

Q. Have you already taught third year level?

answer	yes	no
frequency	6	1
Percentage	85.71%	14.28%

Only one teacher out of seven declared having never taught third year level, still, he tried to answer the questions. And so the percentage we managed to obtain of the responding teachers already having taught third year (85.71%) is more than satisfactory.

II. Questions about teaching oral expression

5. Item five:

Q. As far as third year level is concerned, what do you think should be the over-all goal of the oral expression module?

Answer	f	percentage
a. speak correctly in the target language		
b. communicate (at least) meaning	6	85.71%
c. use the target language in real life situations.	5	71.42%
d. other		

The objective of the question is mainly to determine what aspects of language teaching the teachers associate with oral expression. The answers show that the majority of answers (85.71%) were about communicating meaning.

Rose and Kasper (2001) define “communicating meaning” more specifically as it relates to second language acquisition (SLA) as “communicative action in its socio-cultural context. The communicative action need not include only speech acts,

such as requesting, greeting, and apologizing, but also participating in conversation and engaging in different kinds of discourse".

The participants also gave their agreement about the importance of making students use language in real life situations, and they provided us with five out of seven positive answers, a number that represents the percentage of 71.42.

6. Item six:

answer	frequency	percentage
a. audio lingual		
b. communicative	7	100%
c. other		

Q.a. what approach or method do you think is the most appropriate to attain this goal?

Q.b. Justify your choice

All the teachers agree that when it comes to third year students, the subjects are individuals who are supposed to have gone beyond the simple memorization of structure based dialogues and other activities offered by the audio lingual method, and have reached a more functional-notional level. And so the answers were unanimous in designating the communicative approach as the most appropriate foreign language approach to attain the objectives chosen in the previous questions (communicating meaning and using language in real life situations).

1. **Item seven**:

Q. What are the activities you usually use?

A. This question was mainly designed to test the validity of the previous one.

Although 100% of answers claim using a communicative approach, but some activities they have talked about are not communicative at all (listening comprehension, filling the gaps, drills...etc). And so those invalid answers are not taken into consideration.

On the other hand, activities such as role-plays, simulations, improvisations, engaging in debates and discussion sessions were suggested by the respondents, and these activities are indeed communicative because they engage students in different social roles and speech events. Moreover, such activities provide opportunities to practice the wide range of pragmatic and sociolinguistic abilities that students need in interpersonal encounters outside the classroom.

2. **Item eight:**

Q: Would you qualify these activities as:

answer	frequency	percentage
a.teacher centered		
b.student centerd	3	42.85%
c.subject matter centred	4	57.14%

A: The results of this question show that no teacher from the participants still uses a teacher centred way in teaching oral expression, whereas 57.14% declare focusing on the subject matter, i.e. the linguistic item itself, and 42.85% qualify their teaching method as students' centred.

9. **Item nine**:

Q: What kind of input do you (usually) use?

answer	frequency	percentage

a.authentic material	7	100%
b.teacher's talk	6	85.71%
c.students' talk		
d.other		

A: The answers collected from this question contradict once more the claiming of the communicative approach on the one hand and the answers of the previous question on the other: when the teacher's talk is considered as the only kind of input without letting the students contribute in this, so it is no longer a student's centred nor a communicative way of teaching. This is not to claim that teachers' talk is not necessary, but to draw the attention that student's talk through different conversations is an extremely important kind of input.

On the other hand, 100% of teachers claim using authentic materials as the primary input.

10.**Item ten**:

Q: What role do you attribute to input?

answer	frequency	percentage
a. very important	7	100%
b. important		

A: 100% of the respondents give a very significant importance to input. Whether gathered through out-of-class observation or brought into the classroom through audiovisual media, input, and more specifically authentic input, is indispensable for pragmatic learning. This is because students are expected to build their own pragmatic knowledge on the right kind of input. However, it is not the only way that secures successful pragmatic development; Students' experiences are interpretive

rather than just registering.

11.**Item eleven**:

Q: Do you use the native language for classroom management?

answer	frequency	percentage
a. very often		
b. From time to time		
c. rarely	3	42.85%
d. never	4	57.14%

A: 57.14% of the questionnaire participants declare never using the native language, and 42.85% say that they use it rarely.

This question is asked because the use of the target language in classroom management is extremely important when targeting the pragmatic aspect of language, for it is the only situation where language is not used as a content but just as a tool in itself, and this is what initiates second or foreign language students to speech acts (for example) .

12.**Item twelve**:

Q: Does your feedback focus rather on:

Answer	frequency	percentage
a. form	3	42.85%
b. content		
c. use		
d. All of these	4	57.14%
e. others		

A: The answers collected from this question varied from focusing feedback on form (42.85%) to focusing on all the aspects mentioned .i.e. form, content and use of language.

13. Item thirteen:

Q. a: Do you qualify your teaching method as offering opportunities to students to develop their competence in communication?

Q.b: Explain

answer	frequency	percentage
a.yes	7	100%
b. No		

A: All the respondents answered positively when asked whether they view their teaching method as fostering competence in communication, they gave different explanations which, interestingly enough, do not reflect a very advanced consciousness about the communicative language teaching: their roles as facilitators of learning and independent participants within the group, the variation of activities from pre-communicative to communicative activities and even the psychological aura of a communicative class.

III. **About students' competence in communication**

14. Item fourteen:

Q.a: As far as third year students are concerned, how would you evaluate their level of competence in communication?

answer	frequency	percentage
a.good		
b.acceptable	3	42.85%
c.still poor	4	57.14%

Q.b: in case it is not the expected level, do you think that the "drawback" stems mainly from:

Answer	Frequency	percentage
a.The student	5	71.42%
b.The method	2	28.57%
c.other		

The collected data show that our participants are not very satisfied of their general students' competence in communication: 42.85% qualify it as acceptable and 57.14% declare it still poor and not having reached the expected level from third year students. And they explain that this stems primarily from students themselves then from the method(s) used. When having interviewed some of the respondents they have clarified that when speaking about the method, they refer above all to the means and materials.

15. Item fifteen:

Q. a: a student is considered as having achieved the expected level when:

Answer	frequency	percentage
a. he fills time with talk		
b.he talks in semantically dense sentences		
c.he has appropriate things to say in a wide range of contexts.	6	85.71%
d.he is creative and imaginative	2	28.57%
e.all of these	1	14.28%

Q.b: Justify.

A: Because our respondents have already judged their students' level of competence in communication as being less than good, we saw it necessary to ask them about the parameters they have used in such an assessment (judgment). Two of them (28.57%) answered by emphasizing on the creativity of the student, 85.71% are interested in the ability of the student to use appropriate things in a wide range of contexts, and one

respondent representing the percentage of 14.28 explains that a student is communicatively competent when he has mastered all the proposed parameters.

The explanations the teachers have provided are mainly about their emphasis on the third parameter .i.e. when a student has appropriate things to say in a wide range of contexts. They argue that the use of language is appropriate or inappropriate not only in relation to the linguistic context of an interaction but also in relation to the situational context, both physical and social.

16. Item sixteen:

Q.a: Do you think that the correct use of the formal systems of syntax and semantics does itself ensure the effectiveness of communication?

answer	frequency	percentage
yes		
No	7	100%

Q.b: In case your answer is “no”, what do you think students need to be aware of in order to be communicatively competent?

A: All the respondents are aware that using correctly the formal systems of the target language doesn't mean that the learner is competent in communication, this is as explained by Bardovi-Harlig (1996); that "a focus on grammatical competence, as a still standard procedure in most ESL and EFL learning environments, does not lead to communicative competence and often leads to serious pragmatic failure".

Our respondents have tried to mention many other aspects of communication more important than grammar and syntax in ensuring effective communication, to state

some of them, the ability to use and answer appropriately speech acts, understanding functions of the target language beyond the structural aspect, being aware of (at least) some idiomatic expressions, knowing about the cultural linguistic and social differences…etc.

17. Item seventeen:

Q.a: Do you think students are aware of the differences in social and contextual communicative strategies between their first and target languages?

answer	frequency	percentage
yes		
No	7	100%

Q.b: explain.

A: Although 100% of teachers claim that their students are not aware of the differences of contextual communicative strategies between L1 and L2, some have added the remark that some students know about this. They explain that this is illustrated in their students' translation of full Arabic expression into English, thinking that they convey the same message, or when they are unable to respond correctly to some speech acts.

IV. about pragmatic competence

18. Item eighteen:

Q.a: what do you think of the hypothesis that: “In order to develop competence in the target language, learners must engage in real communication?”

answer	frequency	percentage
a.agree	7	100%
b.disagree		

Q.b: In case you agree, what does “real communication” mean?

Answer	frequency	percentage
a.using full correct sentences		
b.knowing the appropriate utterances to use in different contexts	7	100%
c.using language creatively	2	28.57%

A: All the questionnaire participants agree that the only way to be communicatively competent is to engage in real communication. And once more, when asked about their conception of "real communication", 100% of the answers gave priority to using the appropriate utterances in different contexts. Not to forget that 28.57% added the importance of using language creatively.

19. Item nineteen.

Q: What do learners need to know in order to be able to engage in real communication?

answer	frequency	percentage
a.the different structures		
b.the different functions		
c.the different uses in different context		
d.all of these	7	100%

A: If in one of the previous questions, the respondents answered that what makes a student communicatively competent is above all his ability to use language in different contexts, the answers they have given to this question are - not contradicting

- but more demanding, because they have answered that in order to engage in real communication, a learner needs to know about the different structures of the target language **and** its different functions **and** its different uses in different contexts.

20. Item twenty:

Q.a: Do you think that communication can be developed independently of its socio-cultural context?

answer	frequency	percentage
yes		
no	7	100%

Q.b: . In case your answer is “no”, what socio-cultural aspects of the target language could be introduced to foreign language learners.

Answer	frequency	percentage
a. conveying and interpreting non literal meanings	2	28.57%
b. performing speech acts	7	100%
c. discourse functions	6	85.71%
d. others (specify)		

Q.c: How?

In the first table, the percentage of answers isn't surprising because all the participants have already, through the previous questions, shown the importance they give to socio-cultural language knowledge and use in communicative competence. When asked about what aspects could possibly be introduced in foreign language learning, they were unanimous in choosing the speech acts, 85.71% viewed also the discourse functions as possible to be taught, and only 28.57% talked about the possibility of introducing the aspect of conveying and interpreting non-literal

meanings.

Talking about how this could be implemented, our respondents all emphasised the importance of using different authentic (especially audio-visual) materials during oral expression sessions, because this is the only possible way students can get in touch with native speakers.

21. Item twenty-one:

Q.a: is it better to teach these aspects:

answer	frequency	percentage
implicitly	5	71.42%
Explicitly	2	28.57%

Q. b: justify.

A: While the majority of our questionnaire respondents (71.42%) emphasise the necessity of implicit instruction to achieve the socio-cultural aspects treated in the previous question, others (28.57%) claim that it is only through implicitly integrating those aspects of the target language that FL learners benefit its development.

The first group explain that this socio-cultural knowledge, as culture in general, is a subconscious system, therefore it is difficult, not to say impossible, to make it explicit, and so it is better to teach it in a holistic way. The other group, however, explain that by experience, they know that if the learner is not consciously targeting one aspect of a language, s/he cannot develop a competence in it. And so, it is indispensable to explain to the learner each time what he is supposed to learn.

22. Item twenty-two:

Q.a: Are there ways to structure classroom activities to make those socio-cultural aspects more accessible to EFL learners?

answer	frequency	percentage
yes	6	85.71 %
No	1	14.28 %

Q.b: In case your answer is “yes”, would you suggest some of these ways?

A: 85.71 % of the respondents seem optimistic about the possibility of making the pragmatic aspects already mentioned accessible to the learner, explaining that this would be better achieved if our learners get in touch with native speakers. But because this is an "ideal" solution, our participants suggested that if the learner is more exposed to authentic audio-visual materials and exercising what he has watched, this may make him more able to use those socio-pragmatic aspects.

On the other hand, we have one respondent representing the percentage of 14.28, who has claimed that our learners can never accede to the mastery of the socio-cultural aspects of the target language because they are the property of native speakers.

23. Item twenty-three:

Q: What would you suggest as far as “a diagnostic evaluation of E F L students’ competence in communication and the need of integrating pragmatic insights to develop oral performance” is concerned?

A: This open question allowed us to collect a number of interesting answers and

suggestions corresponding most of the time with the literature reviewed in the previous part and most importantly with our expectations. To mention first the most preponderant, all our respondents remarked that the investigation treats a new subject. Some have added the remark that they knew about Pragmatics only as a research area in first language L1 development, but they have thought that it is beyond the reach of foreign language learners for it is based on socio-cultural knowledge, something witch cannot be mastered out of its natural context. An interesting analysis suggests that because of the contextual nature of pragmatics acquisition, the objective of making learners achieve a certain proficiency of pragmatic competence in a foreign language requires a progression away from a view of language as a formal and context-independent system towards a far broader functional contextual framework.

Some participants have evoked the point of linguistic transfer; they have explained that the failure of using appropriately the so-called pragmatic items is mainly because the learners' L1 pragmatic knowledge significantly influences their comprehension and production of pragmatic performance in the target language. They observed that learners frequently misuse some strategies in the target language because of some context variables as social distance which are different from their first language.

Another interesting remark was that instead of talking about advanced learners, why not introducing pragmatics to beginners, for it is the best way, according to the respondent in question, to make learners better fossilize its use.

II.5. Major findings

From the responses of the participants to the questionnaire, it was found that although nearly all the teachers claim that concerning third year students, the communicative approach is the one adopted in oral expression classes, but they expressed frustration at the level of their students' competence in communication.

The analysis of data revealed many findings that can be summarised in four main statements:

- teachers are aware that we cannot help learners to be communicatively competent through only developing their mastery of linguistic items .i.e. they are conscious that linguistic competence doesn't ensure in itself communicative competence.

- The teachers of oral expression think that their students' level of competence in communication is not the expected level from such an advanced stage (third year), and this is mainly felt in the students' incapacity to use language appropriately in real life situations and in different contexts.

- Although all third year teachers think they are presenting their students with activities promoting their communicative competence, but further questions reveal that these activities do not always reflect authentic interaction nor do they contribute to developing pragmatic competence, and consequently, communicative competence.

- Teachers' knowledge about pragmatic learning and pragmatic competence in general is insufficient to be transmitted to their students. and with such an insufficient knowledge, teachers are not offering their students opportunities to develop their communicative competence.

Partial conclusion

Because the questionnaire was initially designed to diagnose the students' present level of competence in communication, the teachers' answers revealed that they see their students' general level of oral proficiency as insufficient.

Teachers are aware that in order to develop in communicative competence, learners must engage in real communication, and so they need, in addition to the mastery of the grammatical items, to know about the socio cultural uses of the target language. What most of them were sceptical about, however, was the possibility of making students master those socio-cultural aspects of the target language, because they believe that these aspects cannot be taught out of their natural context.

Indeed, communication cannot be developed out of its socio-cultural context, but this latter can be introduced to foreign language learners through a number of aids and activities designed for this purpose. And this will be tested on our sample and proved in the experimentation which follows.

III. The experiment.

III.1. The experimental Design

The design of any experiment is of extreme importance because it has the power to be the most rigid type of research. The design, however, is always dependent on feasibility. And since the present experiment is challenged by its objective to prove the "teachability" of socio-cultural linguistic aspects of English as a foreign language, setting a plan for the experiment wasn't an easy task. The other challenging task was to control as many confounding variables as possible in order to reduce errors in the assumptions that were made. It was also extremely desirable that any threats to internal or external validity be neutralized. Because we are here dealing with human subjects, which in itself confounds any study. We were also dealing with the restraints of time and situation and, most importantly, lack of materials, often resulting in less than perfect conditions in which to gather information and implement findings.

III.1.A. Why an experimental design

Since in this part we want to show the impact of some pragmatic activities on developing students' oral proficiency, an experimental study seemed to be the most suitable.

Among the three basic experimental designs known in methodology literature, we have chosen the "true experimental" because it makes up for the shortcomings of the

two other designs: in the pre-experimental design, a single group is often studied but no comparison between an equivalent non-treatment group is made, and so it is impossible to determine if any change within the group itself has taken place. Whereas the Quasi-experimental designs fall short on one very important aspect of the experiment: randomization, although they employ a means to compare groups. And so, our choice was settled on the true experimental design for it allows employing both a control group and a means to measure the change that occurs in both groups.

In this sense, we attempt to control for all confounding variables, or at least consider their impact, while attempting to determine if the treatment is what truly caused the change.

III.1.B. The true experimental design:

The true experiment is often thought of as the only research method that can adequately measure the cause and effect relationship.

Post-test equivalent groups

Randomization → treatment → post-test

Randomization → treatment → post-test

Pre-test post-test equivalent groups

Randomization → pre-test → treatment → post-test

Randomization → pre-test → treatment → post-test

Diagram of True Experimental Designs

In our case, we have opted for what is referred to in the literature as the “Pre-test Post-test Equivalent Groups Study**”**, the most effective in terms of demonstrating cause and effect but it is also the most difficult to perform. The pre-test post-test equivalent groups design provides for both a control group and a measure of change but also adds a pre-test to assess any differences between the groups prior to the study taking place.

III.2. The population investigated and sampling

III.2.A. Designing the population

Not much is known about the order of acquisition in pragmatic development because of a conspicuous lack of longitudinal studies in the field. Nonetheless, several studies (discussed in the previous chapters) have claimed that the acquisition of L2 linguistic competence generally precedes the acquisition of the L2 socio-cultural rules needed to decide which form to map onto which function in which context. In other words, the acquisition of linguistic competence comes before the acquisition of pragmatic competence. Because of this, choosing fourth year students would have been the ideal. But fourth year students do not take oral expression class, and so the next best choice would be third year students.

III.2.B. Sample size and sampling technique

The decision about the sample size and the sampling technique is a compromise between theoretical suggestions about the objective of the research and possibilities

of its practical implementation, taking into account, first of all, expenses on conducting experiment.

Several approaches to defining the sample size are used in practice. For example, it is stated that the sample should amount to at least 5% of population in order to obtain accurate results. The approach is simple and easy to implement, but it doesn't provide any possibility to define the accuracy of the results received.

Sample size could be established taking into account some conditions stipulated beforehand. In our case, carrying an investigation on third year students of Biskra English department would be a very difficult task to accomplish if the whole population is taken.

Third year students of the University of Biskra are approximately 200 students. This population was initially divided for administrative measures into eight groups, which makes an average of 25 in each group.

The sampling technique used to select our experiment subjects is a stratified random sampling technique: First, two groups out of these eight were selected randomly, i.e. without taking into consideration any parameter. After a period of standardization, a second stratified selection was made to choose only 15 members from each group, trying at best to have the two selected groups as homogeneous as possible.

The choice of this sampling technique was manly made to ensure external validity. External validity is related to generalizing the research findings over, at least, the whole population.

III.3. The experiment procedure

To apply the experimental design on study, We have first spent almost two months with both the pre-selected groups “equivalently” to attain standardization, then the stratified selection was made to choose the 15 subjects of the experiment from each group. Both groups have had a pre-test, then the treatment, or work experience. It is important to mention that the two groups were treated in a similar manner to control for variables such as socialization, so the control group was allowed to participate in some activities with a placebo effect while the other experimental group was participating in the full work experience program. Finally, a post test was imposed on both groups and grades were gathered and compared.

III.3.A.The standardization phase:

This phase started by the beginning of in November, and lasted for approximately eight weeks.

The purpose of this phase was:

- To prepare students to the activities of the treatment phase.
- To enhance communicative abilities in general.
- And also to know students in order to be able to make a stratified selection.

while choosing the activities presented to students during this phase, we have tried to progress from ‘controlled practice’ to ‘creative language use’ and varied activities from pre-communicative to communicative activities: first, we aimed at preparing

the students of both groups for later communication by making them practice certain language forms or functions to give them fluent control over linguistic forms.

To mention the activities practiced in class for this purpose, students have:

- performed memorized dialogues (people in the wind, sorry wrong number)
- performed cued dialogues
- Performed role plays (asked to imagine themselves in a situation which could occur outside the classroom. They are asked to adopt a specific role in this situation. And to behave as if the situation really existed, in accordance with their roles.

And then we have moved to an objective more related to the communication of meanings. The learners were expected in these activities to select suitable language forms from their total repertoires, and produce them fluently. Here, learners are more dealing with improvisation activities and role plays, in which they are presented only with a stimulus-situation or asked to adopt particular identities or personality-types, but not necessarily to pursue any particular communicative purposes.

III.3.B. The pre-test

As mentioned in Pollitt & Murray (1996), testing oral proficiency is more challenging than testing other skills: First of all because achieving reliability in such an intrinsically subjective task is very difficult. The problematic nature of reliability

in oral tests may stem also from the rating scales used.

III.3.B.1. The rating scale used

As Davies et al. (1999) explain, a rating scale is a framework that serves as a "*scale for the description of language proficiency consisting of a series of constructed levels against which a language learner's performance is judged*"(p.53). In order to minimize the possibility of different interpretations of scale descriptors by different raters, language categories should be clearly defined.

(a) The Five Point Behavioural-Anchored Rating Scales (BARS)

What we are concerned with in our pre-test, is the participants' awareness and use of defined pragmatic aspects. And because these aspects are abstract parameters, we have tried to relate each parameter with one observable behavior that can be measured. Thus, the type of rating scale used here is a Behavioural-Anchored Rating Scale (BARS).

B.A.R.S is particularly effective for assessing competencies, skills and abilities. It is usually a 3-Point or 5-Point scale and could also be narrative, depending on the number of variables regarded as relatively more important than others in the test.

In our case, have chosen a 5 point scale multiplied by a factor of 4 to increase the weight of the assessment to 20 points in the overall grade. This is because we have seen that four variables are important to measure, and these are:

- Participation: that reveals above all each student's interest and positive reception of the activity presented.

- Awareness of the targeted pragmatic item: This can be tested through the structured questions asked to students about the pragmatic item in question, its use and significance.
- Use of the targeted pragmatic item: which means implementing knowledge about the pragmatic item presented in each activity.
- Creative use: more precisely the use of extra-pragmatic knowledge other than the one targeted in the activity (ies), or the capacity of the student to remember one pragmatic item already treated in previous activities.

N.B. The same rating scale is used throughout the whole experiment.

III.3.B.2. The pre-test activity.

Students of both groups were presented with an activity that was primarily designed to increase students' awareness of two main factors in speech acts production, namely the relationship between interlocutors and the task type. Both groups followed the same procedures explained in the following:

Course: Oral Expression	**Class:** Third Year	**Week:** One	**Duration:** 90mn

Activity: Increasing Awareness of Factors in Speech Act Production

Description of the activity: Performance of short authentic dialogues collected and transcribed, representing potential situations in which students may find themselves.

Goals:

1. To enhance students' communicative competence by helping them make appropriate linguistic choices in the realization of communicative intentions.
2. To increase awareness of the factors involved in speech acts in American English.
3. Introducing students to two essential parameters that guide appropriate linguistic choice: a) the relationship between interlocutors, and b) the task type.

Resources:

1. Two different visual/transcribed interviews recorded with/by native speakers;
2. organizers/grids;

Procedure

1. **Language presentation**

   a. The same target speech act is presented in the two dialogues but with two different parameters.

   b. Students watch (read) and then perform each dialogue.

   c. Teacher elicits relationship between the speakers and type of task from students.

2. **Highlighting of speech act**

   a. the grid is prepared but not yet filled out–on board.

   b. Students, with teacher's help, complete the grid by adding the appropriate linguistic realizations in the relevant quadrants;

   c. teacher and students discuss if task types are considered similarly in their cultures.

   g. students are given then handouts showing cultural differences between the two cultures.

3. **Practice activities:**

Students design and act mini role plays based on scenarios they choose; practicing the target speech act.

Rationale

Many communicative activities targeting speech acts either neglect completely the dimensions of speaker relationship and task type or they present learners with a surplus of different linguistic realizations of a speech act along an imaginary politeness continuum, but without guiding learners in how to choose a linguistic strategy to express the speech act appropriately. Consequently, as observed by Cohen & Olshtain (1993), students have few usable strategies at their disposal for effective and appropriate speech act production.

In this activity, the choice was made on three different speech acts: requests, invitations and apologies. Each speech act was illustrated by some examples representing situations in which the relation between the two interlocutors is formal / informal, and when the task type is easy / difficult to realize. Here, it is worth mentioning that this kind of activities principally requires a native speaker, for s/he can provide students with a wide range of pragmatic expressions, but it was not the case, and so the grid (annex n ?) was completed according to the original recourse of the activity.

III.3.B.3. The pre-test results

III.3.B.3.a. The control group

S.N°	P						A						U. T.P.I						C.U						G / 20
	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	
1			x							x							x		x						09
2					x					x					x					x					10
3				x							x						x			x					12
4				x						x						x			x						09
5				x						x						x				x					10
6						x						x					x				x				16
7					x					x						x					x				12
8						x			x							x				x					11
9				x						x					x					x					09
10					x				x						x						x				10
11				x							x					x				x					11
12						x						x				x					x				15
13					x						x				x					x					11
14				x						x				x						x					08
15				x					x						x						x				09
T	54						49						41						18						162
A.V	3.6						3.26						2.73						1.2						10.8

III.3.B.3.a The experimental group

S.N°	P						A						U. T.P.I						C.U						A.V
	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	
1					x						x						x				x				14
2						x						x				x						x			16
3				x						x					x				x						08
4						x						x					x				x				16
5						x					x				x				x						11
6				x					x						x				x						07
7				x						x					x					x					09
8					x						x					x				x					12
9			x						x						x					x					07
10				x					x						x					x					08
11				x						x					x					x					09
12					x					x						x					x				12
13					x					x					x					x					10
14				x						x						x				x					10
15						x					x						x				x				15
T	56						50						40						18						164
A.V	3.73						3.33						2.66						1.2						10.93

III.3.B.4. Comparison of the results

The variable	CONTROL GROUP		EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	
	score	level	Score	level
Participation	03.6	= 00	03.73	= 00
Awareness of the pragmatic use	03.26	= 00	03.33	= 00
Use of the targeted pragmatic item	02.73	= 00	02.66	= 00
Creative use	01.2	= 00	01.2	= 00
AVERAGE	10.79	= 00	10.72	= 00

III.3.B.5. analysis

- According to the results collected from the pre-test, mainly concerning the general average obtained from the two groups, we can qualify our random stratified sampling as more or less valid and fair, for there is a relative similarity between the two groups.

- What the activity results report above all, is that even if there is an acceptable level of awareness of the social use of some linguistic items, students do not use this knowledge if they are not asked to do it. That is why, the treatment phase would rely mainly on making students of the experimental group consciously practice the pragmatic item in question (according to the activity), whereas the control group would only have a placebo treatment .i.e. having the same activities but not

oriented towards the objective of the experimental group.

III.3.C. The treatment phase

III.3.C.1. Activity one:

course: Oral expression	**Class:** Third year	**Week:** two	**Duration:** 30mn
Activity: Spot the Problem			
Description of the activity: role plays and problem plays performed by students in front of their classmates who are asked to find the pragmatic violation.			
Goal: 1. To discuss and raise students' awareness of pragmatic violations in the areas of openings, closings, and requests.			
Recourses: 2. Role-cards written or collected by the teacher before class. 3. Problem-cards containing pragmatic errors.			
Procedure 1. Students perform a role-play dialogue, then the problem-cards. 2. Discussion follows in which the students share their observations with each other. 3. The teacher elicits the forms or phrases that caused the problems and possible ways to overcome them. 4. Problems created by differences between the students' mother tongue and English are also discussed.			

Rationale

Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) have observed that EFL learners and their teachers tend to undervalue the seriousness of pragmatic violations and consistently ranked grammatical errors as more serious than pragmatic errors. This tendency

points out how important it is to draw EFL learners' attention to the seriousness of pragmatic violations.

Moreover, in their study of EFL coursebook series, Csizér and Edwards (in preparation) found that the conversational models in the EFL course books examined contained few full openings and closings. What this means is that few dialogues contained shutting down the topic, a pre-closing, or a "post-opening" (such as How are you?). It is necessary, therefore, to complement the input of course books in the EFL classroom and draw students' attention to the importance of pragmatic issues.

This activity was designed to provide a tool for this purpose. The fact that the students have to perform the dialogues and observe each other can help raise their awareness of pragmatic violations. At the last stage of the class, different forms of greetings and the concept of pre-closings can be discussed. But this was implemented only with the experimental group. The control group was asked instead to perform only the role-plays cards and then, not feel the emptiness of the activity, they were asked to imagine a situation similar to the one they have, and act it once more.

III.3.C.1.a. The results

(1) The control group

S.N°	P						A						U. T.P.I						C.U						A.V
	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	
1					x					x					x					x					10
2				x					x							x				x					09
3					x				x						x					x					09
4						x					x				x					x					12
5						x				x					x						x				12
6						x						x					x				x				16
7					x					x					x						x				11
8					x					x						x					x				12
9					x					x					x				x						09
10						x				x					x					x					11
11						x					x				x				x						11
12						x						x					x			x					15
13						x			x						x					x					10
14				x					x						x					x					08
15					x					x				x					x						08
T	65						47						35						16						163
A.V	04.33						03.13						02.33						01.06						10.86

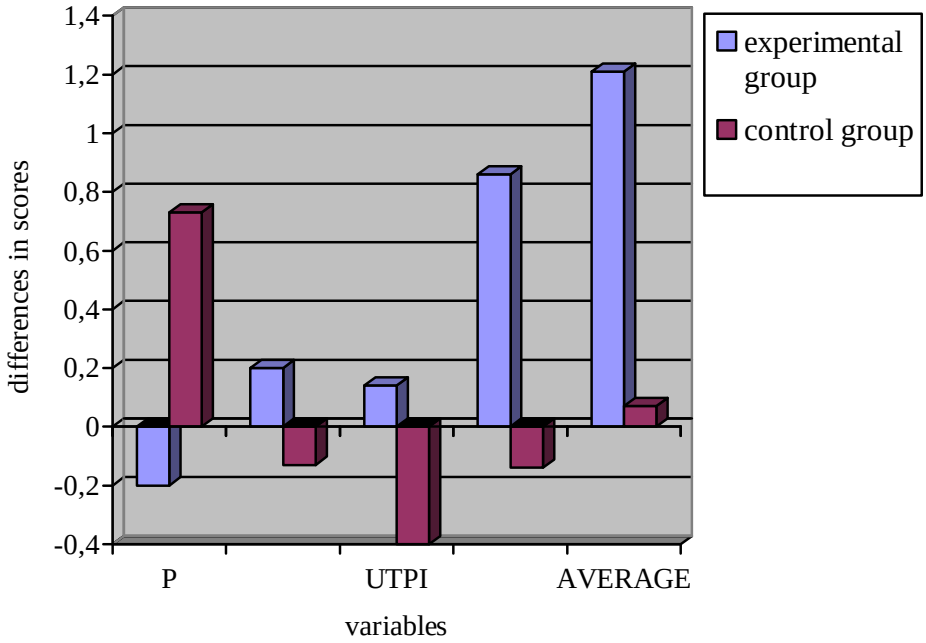
(2) The experimental group

S.N°	P						A						U. T.P.I						C.U						A.V
	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	
1					x							x					x				x				15
2				x								x					x						x		16
3				x						x					x						x				10
4						x					x						x					x			16
5					x					x					x						x				11
6					x					x					x					x					10
7			x						x						x						x				08
8				x						x						x					x				11
9			x							x						x				x					09
10					x					x					x					x					10
11				x						x					x						x				10
12						x				x						x					x				13
13				x							x				x						x				11
14						x					x					x					x				14
15				x								x					x					x			15
T	53						53						42						31						179
A.V	03.53						03.53						02.80						02.06						11.93

III.3.C.1.b. Comparison of the results:

	CONTROL GROUP		EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	
variable	**score**	**difference**	**Score**	**difference**
Participation	04.33	+ 0.73	03.53	- 0.2
Awareness of the pragmatic use	03.13	- 0.13	03.53	+ 0.2
Use of the targeted pragmatic item	02.33	- 0.40	02.80	+ 0.14
Creative use	01.06	- 0.14	02.06	+ 0.86
AVERAGE	10.86	+ 0.07	11.93	+ 1.21

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PRE-TEST AND THE FIRST ACTIVITY SCORES



III.3.C.1.c. Analysis of results:

- What could be interesting here to remark is that the experimental students' general level of participation slightly decreased during the course of the activity, while the control group showed more interest and attention. This could possibly be attributed to adaptation: the control group did not feel any change in the type of activity nor in the task they were asked to accomplish. Whereas the members of the experimental group found themselves asked to detect and practise new tasks, and that is what explains their hesitation to launch into practicing the activity.

- The experimental group's awareness however increased, and this is because of the explanation of what to do, guidance, and orientation through the questions asked by the teacher, something which was not done in the control group, that's why the latter didn't even notice the pragmatic dimension of the dialogues. Same thing when using the pragmatic items in question: through instruction, students of the experimental group found themselves consciously focusing the practice and use of the pragmatic items. And this also made them try to remember the same kind of expressions they already know,

- The general level of the experimental group's oral performance improved significantly compared to the pre-test results, this was also the case with the control group but not with the same copiousness.

III.3.C.2. Activity two

course: Oral expression	**Class:** Third year	**Week:** three/four	**Duration:** 180 mn
Activity: Discourse Markers			
Description of the activity: Performance of short authentic dialogues the teacher has collected and transcribed, representating potential situations in which students may find themselves .			
Goal: To use the discourse markers *well* and *oh* (also *uh* and *ah*) for smoother discourse flow.			
Recourses: 1. Sample sentences and situations for role play 2. Audio or video clips with conversations illustrating these discourse markers			
Procedure 1. Teacher-student mini role play a. The teacher asks several students to request a favor from the teacher. b. The teacher refuses with slightly abrupt answers lacking discourse markers or other delays. c. The teacher refuses with answers marked by delays and discourse markers. d. The process is repeated with other linguistic functions: difficult requests, deflecting compliments, and apologies. 2. Discussion a. The teacher solicits students' impressions of the two sets of answers, including why the second version sounds better, and the purposes and functions of *well* (delay, and unexpected response) and *oh* (realization). b. Drawing from students' responses and the role-play situations, the teacher explains the functions of the discourse markers. 3. Visualization (the remaining time of the first session). Four sample interviews with/by American native speakers are visualized. 4. Student role play a. Students are given more complex situations to role play conversations in groups of two or three. b. The teacher circulates to help or to coach students in their conversational role-plays. c. some groups are selected a to present their role-plays before the entire class.			

Rationale

Some ESL/EFL learners may unintentionally come across as abrupt or brusque in social interactions in English because of a lack of expertise with linguistic devices such as discourse markers. They may not ascertain that such abstract discourse markers serve any purpose other than filling pauses and delaying. Schiffrin (1987) explained that a delay marked by silence would be socially and linguistically awkward, so it is often filled in with a discourse marker such as *well*, *uh*, *oh*, or *ah*…etc, because these markers refer to and anticipate the utterance that follows they also have a transitional function. They can also deflect other potentially face-threatening acts, such as topic shifts (*well, oh*), which could disrupt the flow of the discourse. They could be used as realization markers or for topic shifts (*oh*), or they could be used for situations in which interlocutors compete in turn-taking (*well*). *Oh* can also be described as a mental change-of-state marker, indicating a change in the speaker's thinking that necessitates a shift in the discourse.

This activity took a relatively long time with the experimental group (two weeks) in which the students were asked a number of tasks. But the control group took only the visualization session, in which the four sample conversations were watched, and in the second session, they have had discussions about different recurrent themes in these videos.

III.3.C.2.a. the results

(1) The control group

S.N°	P						A						U. T.P.I						C.U						A.V
	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	
1			x						x							x					x				09
2				x					x							x					x				10
3				x						x					x					x					09
4					x					x							x				x				13
5						x				x						x				x					12
6						x					x						x				x				15
7					x						x					x			x						11
8				x							x					x					x				12
9				x						x							x		x						10
10					x						x					x				x					12
11					x					x						x			x						10
12						x					x					x				x					13
13				x						x						x			x						09
14				x						x					x				x						08
15				x						x					x					x					09
T	54						48						45						15						162
A.V	03.60						03.20						03						01						10.80

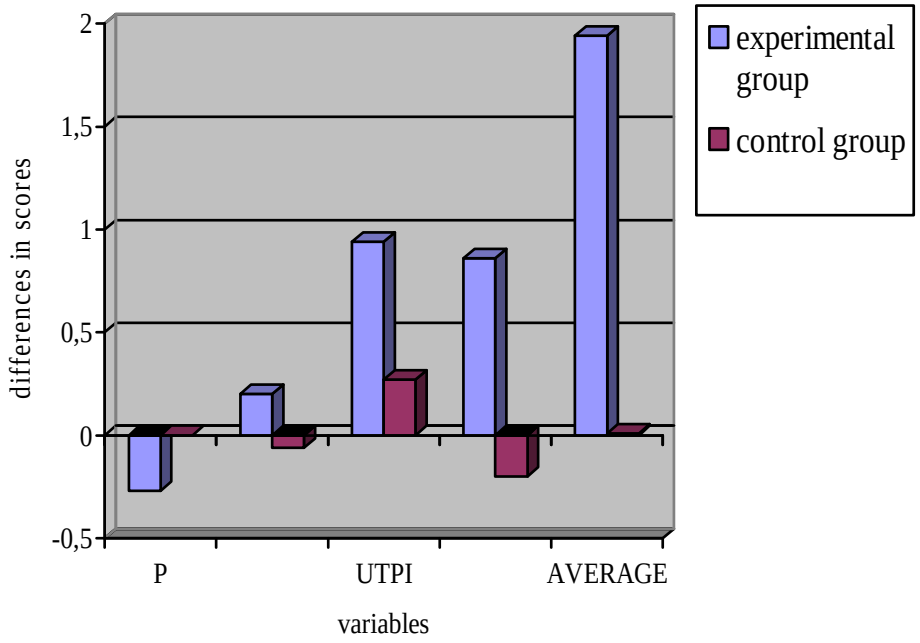
(2) The experimental group

S.N°	P						A						U. T.P.I						C.U						A.V
	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	
1					x						x							x				x			16
2						x					x							x			x				16
3				x						x							x			x					11
4					x						x						x					x			15
5					x					x					x					x						10
6					x						x					x				x					12
7				x						x						x				x					10
8				x							x						x			x					12
9				x							x					x					x				12
10			x							x						x						x			11
11			x						x								x				x				10
12				x						x							x				x				12
13					x					x						x						x			13
14					x						x						x					x			15
15					x							x				x						x			15
T	52						53						54						31						190
A.V	03.46						03.53						03.60						02.06						12.66

III.3.C.2.b. comparison of the results

	CONTROL GROUP		EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	
variable	**score**	**difference**	**Score**	**difference**
Participation	03.60	= 00.00	03.46	- 00.27
Awareness of the pragmatic use	03.20	- 00.06	03.53	+ 00.20
Use of the targeted pragmatic item	03.00	+ 00.27	03.60	+ 00.94
Creative use	01.00	- 00.20	02.06	+ 00.86
AVERAGE	10.80	+ 00.01	12.66	+ 01.94

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PRE-TEST AND THE SECOND ACTIVITY SCORES



III.3.C.2.c. Analysis of the results :

- Once more, the participation level of the experimental group students declined compared to the marks they have obtained in the pre-test. We have observed that this time the cause is that most students haven't taken seriously the activity and some of its different stages. We have remarked that although students did not find it knew when they have watched the native speakers using these discourse markers, but when it came to explaining their use or asking them to imitate, the majority were interested, and even tried to contribute by discussing some other discourse markers. Concerning the control group, we can explain the null change in the level of participation by saying that the activity is no new to them, and thus there was little interest in contributing to debates.

- The general oral proficiency level of the experimental group augmented considerably. This is because, as explained by students themselves, they feel more free in using speech poses and hesitation marks, something which they considered before, not as a natural phenomenon, but a language deficiency.

- The average of the control group did not change much (the difference of 0.01) from the pre-test stage.

III.3.C.3. activity three:

course: Oral expression	**Class:** Third year	**Week:** five/six/seven	**Duration:** 180mn
Activity: teaching refusals			
Description of the activity : Performance of short authentic dialogues the teacher has collected and transcribed, representating potential situations in which students may find themselves .			
Goal: 1. To raise awareness of differences in making refusals between Algerian and American speakers 2. To make learners aware of what they already know and encouraging them to use their universal or transferable L1 pragmatic knowledge in FL contexts. 3. To teach the linguistic forms that are likely to be encountered in making refusals in (American)English 4. To help students to realize that "speaking is doing," to think about their own language use, and to discover common and different aspects of conducting speech acts between Arabic and (American) English speakers.			
Recoures: 1. L1 and FL dialogues for comparisons. 2. Handouts containing different American speech acts. 3. Handouts spotting differences between American and Arabic speech acts (complaints, apologies, complaints)			

Procedure of the activity

This activity is a long (three weeks) and varied activity, some of its stages are presented in both groups and others were exclusively practiced by the experimental group members.

It was divided into five phases:

1. *The warm up phase* is presented in a listening comprehension task. This phase is designed to help students get a feel for making a refusal. The students hear two different dialogues and are asked to answer questions about what is happening and why they prefer one dialogue over the other. One of the dialogues represents how Americans typically refuse invitations, and the other is first produced in the students' mother tongue, and then translated it into the target language.

n.b. students of the control group are asked instead to complete the second dialogue.

Dialogue (A)	**A**: me and my friends have agreed to go camping next weekend, Would you like to come with us? **B**: it's very nice from you, thank you, but I swear I can't, I have a math test on Monday. **A:** come on, it should be a lot of fun, it' just for the weekend, come on! **B**: I swear to god that I cannot, I really need to study. Thank you for inviting me, though.
Dialogue (B)	**A**: Hi. I'm planning to go camping next weekend with my friends. Would you like to come with us? **B**: Oh, I'd like to, but I can't go. I have a math test on Monday. **A**: Are you sure you don't want to go? Come on. It should be a lot of fun. **B**: I wish I could, but I really need to study for that test. Thanks for inviting me, though.

This activity raises students' awareness that this speech act can be realized in different ways. At this phase, students (of the experimental group) are asked to indicate the difference between the two dialogues without being told which dialogue is the translated one. Some students say that the main difference is that person B (in dialogue one) swears frequently. Some others remarked that the two persons in dialogue two are direct whether while inviting or refusing. Another answer was that in dialogue one, person (A) seems very insisting.

2. *The Doing phase*: students (of both groups) are presented with a situation (situation 1) also involving a refusal. They are asked first to write responses similar to a discourse completion task and, second, to role-play the situation with their classmates.

Situation 1: refusal of an invitation to a Trip
A friend of yours, asks you to go on trip with him/her and other friends next weekend, but you don't want to because you don't like some of the people who are going.

The aim of this phase is to see what each learner can do with his/her present knowledge prior to any instruction in cultural differences and pragmatics.

Contributions and examples presented by the students show that the majority of them (still) think in Arabic and only translate it into English.

3. The thinking phase: In this phase students (only of the experimental group) are asked to analyze various ways to perform refusals. These ways are simplified

versions of Speech Act Sets, which are often used in the analysis of interlanguage pragmatics research. With these, learners can examine the strategies they used in Situation (1) in the Doing phase.

Strategy	**Examples**
Type A: Positive Opinion	1. That sounds wonderful, but … 2. I'd like/love to, but … 3. I wish I could, but …
Type B: Thanking	1. Thank you for the invitation. 2. Thanks, but …
Type C: Apology	1. I'm sorry, but …
Type D: Alternative	1. Maybe some other time. 2. Perhaps next time
Type E: Direct Refusal	1. I can't go. 2. I can't make it.
+ Reason	1. I already have other plans. 2. I have to …

Consequently, Students can choose more than one type of strategy, depending on what they said in Situation (1).

4. *The understanding phase*: In this phase the learners (of the experimental group) are encouraged to discover the characteristic differences that exist in Arabic and English when various speech acts are performed. and this was achieved through the explanation and discussion of the handout given to them (refusals).(see the annexes)

5. *The Using phase*: The aim of this phase is to provide sufficient oral practice based on the knowledge of how to use the vocabulary and expressions related to refusals and

which students (of the experimental group) have acquired till now.

In the Using phase, model dialogues are presented for listening and role-playing. This exercise helps students use appropriate linguistic expressions in performing refusals. They are asked to pay special attention to rhythm and intonation as they read the dialogues aloud so they can put appropriate feeling into the words.

Dialogue 1	**A**: Hi. I'm planning to go on a ski trip next weekend. How about going with us? **B** : Oh, I'm sorry, but my family has already made plans
Dialogue 2	**A**: Hi. I'm planning to go on a ski trip next weekend. How about going with us? **B**: Oh, I'd love to go, but I've got to work this weekend
Dialogue 3	**A**: Hi. I'm going on a ski trip with some of my friends next weekend. Would you like to come with us? **B**: I can't afford to go on a ski trip right now. I used all my money for my new car. Perhaps some other time.
Dialogue 4	**A**: Hi. I'm planning to go on a ski trip next weekend. Can you come with us? **B**: I can't make it this weekend. I've been invited to a party on Saturday.
Dialogue 5	**A**: Hi. I'm going on a ski trip with some of my friends next weekend. Would you like to come with us? **B**: Oh, thanks for asking me, but I need to do homework for my biology class. Thank you for the invitation, though

After having read the dialogues, the following new situations are given so that the students may practice writing responses and creating their own role-plays.

Situation 2	Your classmate is a theater actor. He is going to perform a play soon and he asks you to buy a ticket to it. You really do not want to go because it will cost you 5000 DA and you feel this is too expensive.
Situation 3	A professor at your college invites you to a party at his house. But because you don't like him very much, you don't feel like going.

Students (of the experimental group) are also asked to prepare other situations for further role-play practice.

The overall objective is that students end their practice **not** by memorizing and repeating "an ideal model dialogue," **but** by creating their own dialogues which reflect their individual identity. As Giles, Coupland, and Coupland (1991) put it, "*Successful communication is a matter of optimal rather than total convergence*." The last phase of activities offers students opportunities for optimal convergence.

Rationale

Instruction in pragmatics helps students realize that "speaking is doing," to think about their own language use, and to discover common and different aspects of conducting speech acts across cultures. Various class activities, such as listening comprehension and role-plays, help students improve their linguistic skills as well. Asking learners to compare and try out patterns of speech act production typical of another culture encourages them to reflect on how far they want to go in adapting or adopting the target language realizations. Some students express reluctance to use certain strategies, such as apologies or saying excuses, because of their cultural

values.

The third activity results are taken as a reference for the post-test grades.

Almost all the phases of this activity were applied to both groups but with different objectives: while the experimental group benefited all the time guidance and explanation of the different stages and were oriented towards using the speech act, the tasks performed by the second control group did not go beyond communicative activities .i.e. they were just asked to complete the dialogues or to role play without drawing their attention to any pragmatic feature.

III.3.C.a. The results

(a) The control group

S.N°	P						A						U. T.P.I						C.U						A.V
	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	
1					x					x					x					x					10
2						x				x					x					x					11
3				x					x						x					x					08
4						x				x						x				x					12
5					x							x			x						x				13
6						x					x					x						x			15
7						x						x			x				x						12
8					x						x				x					x					11
9					x					x					x				x						09
10				x						x						x				x					10
11					x						x				x					x					11
12						x					x					x						x			15
13						x				x				x					x						09
14				x						x						x				x					10
15			x							x					x					x					08
T	61						52						34						17						164
A.V	04.06						03.46						02.26						01.13						10.93

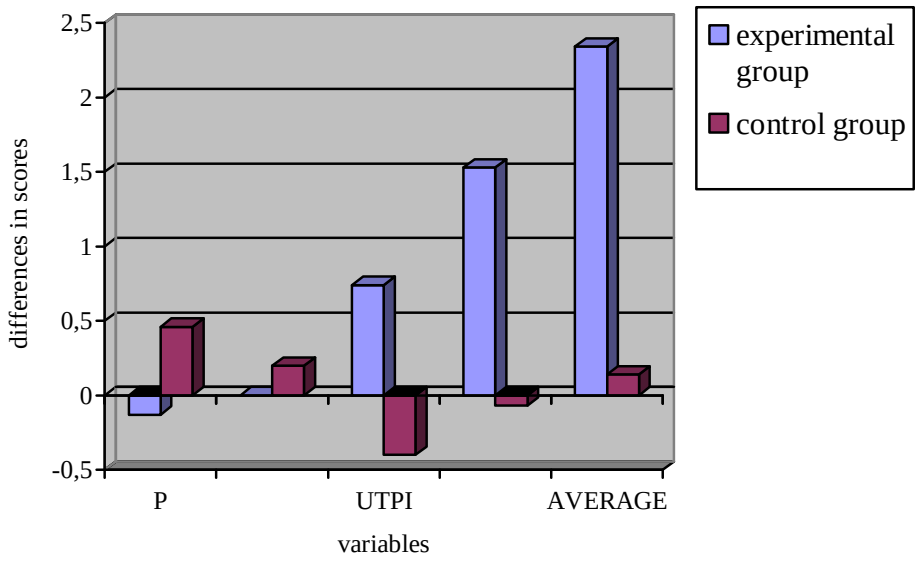
(b) The experimental group

S.N°	P						A						U. T.P.I						C.U						A.V
	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5	
1					x						x						x						x		16
2						x				x								x				x			16
3					x					x						x					x				12
4					x						x						x						x		16
5				x							x					x						x			13
6					x					x						x					x				12
7				x							x				x					x					10
8					x				x							x						x			12
9					x					x				x						x					09
10					x					x				x							x				10
11				x						x							x					x			13
12			x								x							x					x		15
13				x						x							x				x				12
14				x							x						x					x			14
15					x					x								x					x		16
T	54						50						51						41						196
A.V	03.60						03.33						03.40						02.73						13.06

III.3.C.3.b. Comparison of the results:

	CONTROL GROUP		EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	
variable	**score**	**difference**	**Score**	**difference**
Participation	04.06	+ 00.46	03.60	- 00.13
Awareness of the pragmatic use	03.46	+ 00.20	03.33	= 00.00
Use of the targeted pragmatic item	02.26	- 00.40	03.40	+ 00.74
Creative use	01.13	- 00.07	02.73	+ 01.53
AVERAGE	10.93	+ 00.14	13.06	+ 02.34

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PRE-TEST AND THE POST-TEST SCORES



III.3.C.3.c. Analysis of the results:

- This activity was very beneficial to the experimental group students, Instruction in pragmatics helped think about their own language use, and to discover common and different aspects of conducting speech acts between their native and target language.

- The same results were not attained by the control group because their class activities, such as listening comprehension and role-plays, were only communicative activities.

- During the understanding phase, the learners (of the experimental group) were very enthusiastic about the differences between Arabic and American English in the production of the speech act. Also the model dialogues presented In the Using phase helped students use appropriate linguistic expressions in performing their role-plays. Even at the level of the intonation and rhythm used in the different examples.

III. 4. The overall experiment finding

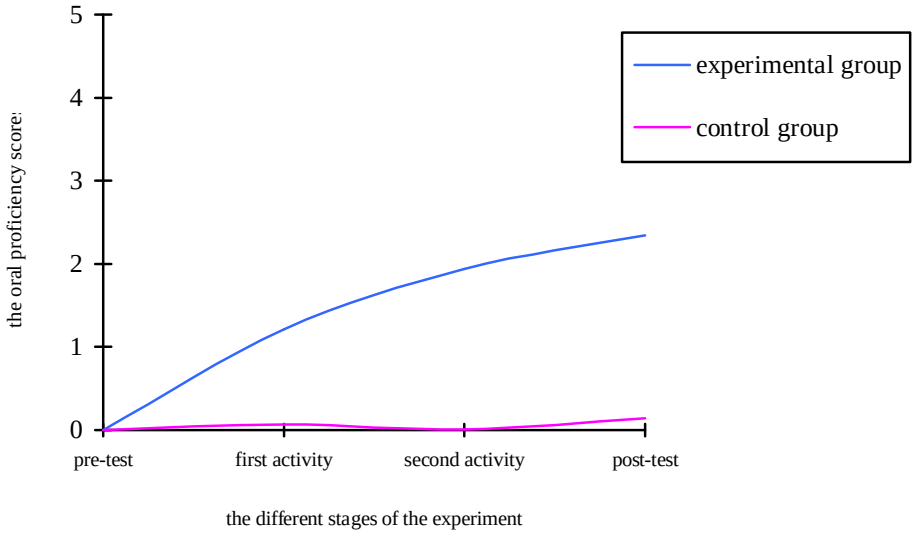
The findings of the three activities of the experiment can be summarised as follows:

- Although students of both groups manifest interest in the activities, students of the experimental group seem very hesitant in taking part of the procedures of these activities. this by no means reveals underachievement, but it could be explained by the fact that the tasks expected from the students of the

experimental group are not familiar, for all those language elements that used to be viewed by students as “absurd” and not worth noticing are now at the heart of the learning process.

- According to the curve bellow, we notice a considerable change in the general level of oral proficiency of the experimental group, whereas the curve of the control group shows that there is no great difference between the pre-test nad the post test scores.

CHANGE IN THE ORAL PROFICIENCY LEVEL THROUGH THE DIFFERENT PHASES OF THE EXPERIMENT



Because these results are observable and may be viewed as being subjective, we need to have recourse to a more scientific analysis, which is a statistical examination of data.

III.5. The statistical analysis of the experiment results

According to observed facts, the descriptive data, and the graphical representations of the score changes, it is obvious that the two groups have demonstrated different progress of oral proficiency. But this change wouldn't be scientifically enough as a proof if it was not statistically confirmed via the t-test .

III.5.A. The t-test

The t-test is the guarantee of the validity of any experiment based on comparison between two samples. It is a parametric statistical tool used to determine whether a significant difference exists between the means of two distributions or the mean of one distribution and a target value, and tests the null hypothesis that the two samples are drawn from populations with the same mean.

The application of the t-test allows us to check the accuracy of our hypotheses and assumptions, and to prove that the independent variable indeed has got an effect on the dependent variable.

The observable value of the t-test is called the t-value. A T-value near 0 is the evidence for the null hypothesis that there is no correlation between the attributes. A T-value far from 0-either positive or negative- (and in some resources, far from 2) is the evidence for the alternative hypothesis that there is correlation between the attributes.

To calculate the t-value, we need to apply the following formula:

$$TN_1 + N_{2-2} = \frac{(\overline{X_1} - \overline{X_2})\sqrt{(N_1 + N_2 - 2)N_1N_2}}{\sqrt{(N_1S^2{}_1 + N_2S_2{}^2)(N_1 + N_2)}}$$

With:

- G1 is the experimental group and G2 the control group
- X_x = individual scores
- X_x = the mean (the sum of cores divided by the number of individuals).
- $X_X{}^2$ = squared scores
- N_X = number of subjects.
- S.D = standard deviation. And it is the virtual value assigned to the probable difference of levels among the subjects and which shows how much "scatter" there is in the data.
- $N_1+N_2–2$ = the degree of freedom.

So before calculating the t-value, we need to:

- Calculate the mean.
- Calculate the variance of each group.
- Finally, calculate our t-value.

The t-test is applied on the scores of the pre-test and the last experimental activity taken as a post-test reference.

III.5.A.1. Calculating the mean:

a. The pre-test scores

N	X_1	X_1^2	X_2	X_2^2
Student 01	07	49	08	64
Student 02	07	49	09	81
Student 03	08	64	09	81
Student 04	08	64	09	81
Student 05	09	81	09	81
Student 06	09	81	10	100
Student 07	10	100	10	100
Student 08	10	100	10	100
Student 09	11	121	11	121
Student 10	12	144	11	121
Student 11	12	144	11	121
Student 12	14	196	12	144
Student 13	15	225	12	144
Student 14	16	256	15	225
Student 15	16	256	16	256
∑	164	1930	162	1820

- **Mean of the first (experimental) group's pre-test scores:**

$$\overline{X_1} = \frac{\sum X_1}{N_1} = \frac{164}{15} = 10.93$$

- **Mean of the second (control) group's pre-test scores:**

$$\overline{X_2} = \frac{\sum X_2}{N_2} = \frac{162}{15} = 10.80$$

b. The post-test scores

N	X_1	X_1^2	X_2	X_2^2
Student 01	09	81	08	64
Student 02	10	100	08	64
Student 03	10	100	09	81
Student 04	12	144	09	81
Student 05	12	144	10	100
Student 06	12	144	10	100
Student 07	12	144	10	100
Student 08	13	169	11	121
Student 09	13	169	11	121
Student 10	14	196	11	121
Student 11	15	225	12	144
Student 12	16	256	12	144
Student 13	16	256	13	169
Student 14	16	256	15	225
Student 15	16	256	15	225
∑	196	2640	164	1860

- **Mean of the first (experimental) group's post-test scores:**

$$\overline{X_1} = \frac{\sum X_1}{N_1} = \frac{196}{15} = 13.06$$

- **Mean of the second (control) group's post-test scores:**

$$\overline{X_2} = \frac{\sum X_2}{N_2} = \frac{164}{15} = 10.93$$

III.5.A.2. Calculating The variance:

The variance is a measure of how spread out a distribution is. It is computed as the average squared deviation of the sum of numbers from the mean.

a. the experimental group variance:

$$S_1^{\,2} = \frac{\sum X_1^{\,2}}{N_1} - \overline{X_1^{\,2}}$$

$$S_1^{\,2} = \frac{2640}{15} - (13.06)^2$$

$$S_1^{\,2} = 176 - 170.56$$

$$S_1^{\,2} = 05.44$$

b. the control group variance:

$$S_2^{\,2} = \frac{\sum X_2^{\,2}}{N_2} - \overline{X_2^{\,2}}$$

$$S_1^{\,2} = \frac{1860}{15} - (10.93)^2$$

$$S_2^2 = 124 - 119.46$$

$$S_2^2 = 04.54$$

III.5.A.3. The t-value:

$$TN_1 + N_{2-2} = \frac{(\overline{X_1} - \overline{X_2})\sqrt{(N_1 + N_2 - 2)N_1N_2}}{\sqrt{(N_1S^2{}_1 + N_2S_2{}^2)(N_1 + N_2)}}$$

$$TN_1 + N_{2-2} = \frac{(13.06 - 10.93)\sqrt{(15 + 15 - 2)15x15}}{\sqrt{(15x5.44 + 15x04.54)(15 + 15)}}$$

$$TN_1 + N_{2-2} = \frac{02.13\sqrt{28x225}}{\sqrt{(81.60 + 68.10)x30}}$$

$$TN_1 + N_{2-2} = \frac{02.13\sqrt{6300}}{\sqrt{149.7x30}} = \frac{02.13x79.37}{\sqrt{4491}}$$

$$TN_1 + N_{2-2} = \frac{169.05}{67.01} = 02.52$$

III.5.B. Interpretation of data:

The T-test applied on the data set was used to determine whether the differences of the dependent variable for the given treatments are statistically significant.

The result of this computation is a value of t=*2.52.* This value is looked up in the t-distribution table and cross referenced with 28 degrees of freedom and 5% significance. The obtained value of 01.70 is less than 2.52. And so we can affirm that the IV has got an effect on the DV.

Conclusion

In English as in many languages, there are many conversational models marking the degree of politeness, the forms of address and even pauses of speech. There are relatively clear-cut socio-cultural rules as to when to use each form, which may be hard to grasp for a non-native speaker of English. However, if these forms and others are made explicit to the FL learner through instructional tasks, he may understand them and consequently, avoid many kinds of misunderstanding and linguistic clashes while interactions with native speakers.

Although we do not pretend to generalize the findings of this experiment outside the population investigated, but through this two stages field work, we have demonstrated that nearly all oral expression teachers agree that the oral performance level displayed by third year students doesn't fit with their expectations. Also they share the same opinion when it comes to what makes them judge this performance as flawed, for they all view their students as incompetent in terms of knowing what communicative acts to use in different situations. These survey results served as a basis for an experimental study which came with the result that, contrary to the old hypothesis, some pragmatic aspects of English can be brought in language classes and , as hypothesized at the beginning of our investigation, make a change in students' level of oral performance.

General Recommendations

According to the findings of the present study, we saw that valid teaching of pragmatics requires a procedure that simulates use of language in an authentic situational context. The procedure must bear on the realisation of the communicative act and its semantic and pragmatic content rather than on external form and accuracy. In preparing an instrument to promote communicative ability, we must recognize the importance of a direct relationship between analytical knowledge of discrete linguistic elements (words, grammatical rules, phonemes, etc,) and the ability to use these elements in meaningful communicative interactions.

To find a way to a more pragmatic language teaching, some basic requirements need first to be met:

- To start with, oral expression teachers need to know that communicative language teaching is more than just pre-communicative activities.
- Communicative language teaching means also teaching Language in contexts in which the learners will find themselves. For example, if learners are university students, the situations for speech acts should relate to those scenarios of situations with professors, university personnel, other students, friends, roommates, and service personnel…etc
- Carefully sequenced activities that move from controlled to less controlled communicative situations so that students are given ample practice time to

gradually become aware of differences in the way the speech act is realized in target language compared to their own language

- Carefully sequenced activities will also allow students to gradually automatize the linguistic realization of a speech act within given situational parameters.
- The language classroom is the environment in which to provide students with structured, yet authentic input; and so an authentic reference point for students that helps them understand that appropriate linguistic choices depend on crucial factors in the speech situation.
- Using the target language as a classroom management language is very important, because the target language here is used not only as a subject matter but as a means of communication, and thus can teach student different speech acts.

General Conclusion

It is clear from even a casual observation of the general third year EFL students' oral performance that these students' oral proficiency only reflects a type of competence which we cannot qualify as communicative. If this mirrors something, then it is the out of date non-communicative teaching techniques used in oral expression classes. Because the new trend in applied linguistics and language teaching is the contextual language learning, and the new techniques are socio-cultural procedures allowing students to practice the target language in a natural context.

Adopting this new approach in the Algerian EFL context long presented a challenge to language teachers, mainly because the pragmatic aspect of English was long believed to be exclusively a trait of native speakers' competence.

But Because of evidence provided by recent researches attesting the success of pragmatic teaching experiences in different EFL contexts, there is a call for experimenting if such a success can be obtained in the Algerian context, to what extent pragmatic teaching can be implemented, and what would be the results of pragmatic teaching on EFL advanced learners' oral proficiency level.

This research raised these and other questions, and suggested that if we introduce some pragmatic insights in third year oral expression class, then students' performance of communicative tasks would improve qualitatively.

According to its objectives, the present study was conducted through two major

stages:

- Oral expression teachers' contribution to diagnose the general level of third year students' competence in communication was needed, and so a questionnaire was proposed with the primal objective of investigating oral expression teachers' perceptions of the constraints of third year EFL communicative competence which affect their oral proficiency.

- Far from being a utopian scheme, a an experiment was designed and followed to confirm the findings of the questionnaire, to prove that some pragmatic components can be taught and to put into practice some activities designed to promote EFL pragmatic competence.

The present study helped to identify a number of findings and results. According to the stages of the research, these results can be grouped into two main categories

1. The questionnaire findings:

- The questionnaire helped to recognise that although it is the communicative approach which is used in teaching oral expression, but the competence developed is far from being communicative. This is shown through the teachers' dissatisfaction with their students' level, which they attribute partly to the lack of exposure to authentic language practice.

- The survey revealed that most oral expression teachers are not equipped with an adequate "up-to-date" theory of teaching. For example, they do not apply

the communicative approach to language teaching from the perspective of language use and communication, and they neglect the pragmatic aspect, a very basic constituent of communicative competence.

2. The experiment findings:

- What the experiment revealed above all that is that through the sheer number of techniques and methods proposed by pragmaticians, learners can be pragmatically competent in another language.

- It revealed also that the more students are explicitly exposed to the pragmatic aspect of language use, the more they take these aspects into consideration when communicating, and consequently, the better their level of oral proficiency becomes.

All in all, this research sought to explore the importance of pragmatic competence with regard to oral performance, and it proved, at least at the level of the population investigated, that the integration of some pragmatic insights in teaching oral expression is an indispensable measure to develop the communicative aspect of students' competence in the target language.

Appendices

Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra
Faculty of arts and human sciences
Department of English.

Student: Lebbal Farida
Supervisor: Dr. Ghouar Omar

Questionnaire for teachers

To teachers of oral expression:

You are kindly invited to answer this questionnaire which investigates "A diagnostic evaluation of E F L students' competence in communication and the need of integrating pragmatic insights to develop oral performance". I am attempting to see the importance you give to culture specific language in teaching oral expression. Your contribution will certainly be of a great help to me.

I. Personal information

1. your educational level

    a. BA (licence)
    b. PG student
    c. MA
    d. Doctorate

2. a. Have you ever been in an English speaking country?
    Yes no

    b. if yes, where?
    ……

3. How many years have you taught oral expression?
    a. less than 5 years
    b. 5 to 10 years
    c. more than 10 years

4. Have you already taught third year level?
    Yes no

II. Questions about teaching oral expression

1. As far as third year level is concerned, what do you think should be the over-all goal of the oral expression module:
    a. To allow students to practice the oral language (be able to speak "correctly" in the target language)
    b. To make students able to communicate at least meaning.
    c. To make students able to use the target language in different real life situations.
    d. other(specify)

    ……
    ……
    ……
    ……

2. a. What approach or method do you think is the most appropriate to attain this goal?
    a. the audio lingual method.
    b. the communicative approach.
    c. others

    (specify) ……
    ……
    ……

    b. Justify your choice ……
    ……
    ……

3. What are the activities you usually use?
    a. ……
    b. ……
    c. ……
    e. ……

4. Would you qualify these activities as:
    a. students centred
    b. teacher centred
    c. subject-matter centred

5. What kind of input do you (usually) use?
    a. authentic materials
    b. teacher 's talk
    c. students talk
    d. others

    (specify) ……
    ……
    ……

6. What role do you attribute to input?
   a. very important
   b. important

7. Do you use the native language for classroom management?
   a. very often
   b. from time to time
   c. rarely
   d. never

8. Does your feedback focus rather on?
   a. form (grammar)
   b. content
   c. use
   c. all of these
   d. others.(specify)
   ……

9. a. Do you qualify your teaching method as offering opportunities to students to develop their competence in communication?
   Yes no

   b. Explain
   ……
   ……
   ……

III. <u>About students' competence in communication</u>

1. a. As far as third year students are concerned, how would you evaluate their level of competence in communication?
   a. good (the level expected from third year students).
   b. acceptable.
   c. still poor.

   b. in case it is not the expected level, do you think that the "drawback" stems mainly from:
   a. the student himself
   b. the method used
   e. other,
   specify ……
   ……
   ……

2. a. A student is considered as having achieved the expected level when:
    a. he fills time with talk, i.e. he talks without awkward pauses for a relatively long time.
    b. he talks in coherent, reasoned, and "semantically dense" sentences
    c. he has appropriate things to say in a wide range of contexts.
    d. he is creative and imaginative in using the language.
    e. all of these.

   b.
   Justify. ……
   ……
   ……

3. a. Do you think that the correct use of the formal systems of syntax and semantics does itself ensure the effectiveness of communication?
   Yes no

   b. In case your answer is “no”, what do you think students need to be aware of in order to be communicatively competent?
   ……
   ……
   ……
   ……

4. a. Do you think students are aware of the differences in social and contextual communicative strategies between their first and target languages?
   Yes no

   b. Explain:
   ……
   ……
   ……
   ……

IV. about pragmatic competence

1. a. What do you think of the hypothesis that: “In order to develop competence in the target language, learners must engage in real communication?”
   Agree disagree

   b. In case you agree, what does “real communication” mean?
    a. Using full, correct sentences to convey specific meanings.
    b. Knowing which appropriate utterances to use in different contexts.
    c. Using the language creatively.

2. What do learners need to know in order to be able to engage in real communication?
   a. The different structures of the target language.
   b. The different functions of the target language
   d. The different uses of the target language in different contexts
   e. All of these.

3. a. Do you think that communication can be developed independently of its socio-cultural context?
   Yes no

   b. In case your answer is “no”, what socio-cultural aspects of the target language could be introduced to foreign language learners?
   a. conveying and interpreting non literal meanings
   b. performing speech acts
   c. discourse functions
   e. others (specify)

……
……
……
……

   c. How?

……
……
……
……

4. a. Is it better to teach these aspects:
   a. Implicitly
   b. explicitly

   b. justify .

……
……
……
……

5. a. Are there ways to structure classroom activities to make those socio-cultural aspects more accessible to EFL learners?
   Yes no

   b. In case your answer is “yes”, would you suggest some of these ways.

……
……
……
……
……

6. What would you suggest as far as “a diagnostic evaluation of E F L students’ competence in communication and the need of integrating pragmatic insights to develop oral performance” is concerned?

……
……
……

Sample Grid used in the first activity

The speech act	The speakers' relationship	The task type	
		Easy to do	**Difficult to do**
Requests	**Informal/ non-distant**	Colleagues at work: Can you hand me that stapler over there?	Two friends: Do you think you can help me with my paper?
	Formal/ Distant	Student to professor: Could you repeat the question?	Student to last semester's professor: I was wondering if you could write a letter of recommendation for me.
Invitations	**Informal/ non-distant**	**Casual event**	**Formal event**
		Two students: Do you want to go for a cup of coffee?	Two friends: I was wondering if you'd want to go to the Kennedy Center?
	Formal/ Distant	Student to professor: Would you like to join us for some coffee after class?	Student to professor: I'd like to invite you to my graduation dinner.
Apologies	**Informal/ non-distant**	**Minor offense**	**Major offense**
		Two friends: (Oops), sorry!	Two neighbors: I am so sorry!
	Formal/ Distant	Strangers in the street: I'm sorry.	Student to professor: I really apologize. I forget the due date.

T-Distribution Table

5% significance

df	α = 0.1	0.05
2	1.886	2.920
3	1.638	2.353
4	1.533	2.132
5	1.476	2.015
6	1.440	1.943
7	1.415	1.895
8	1.397	1.860
9	1.383	1.833
10	1.372	1.812
11	1.363	1.796
12	1.356	1.782
13	1.350	1.771
14	1.345	1.761
15	1.341	1.753
16	1.337	1.746
17	1.333	1.740
18	1.330	1.734
19	1.328	1.729
20	1.325	1.725
21	1.323	1.721
22	1.321	1.717
23	1.319	1.714
24	1.318	1.711
25	1.316	1.708
26	1.315	1.706
27	1.314	1.703
28	1.313	1.701
29	1.311	1.699
30	1.310	1.697
60	1.296	1.671
120	1.289	1.658
∞	1.282	1.645

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